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LIVING PAPERS

(SIXTY)

LIVING PAPERS

CONCERNING

CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES, DOCTRINE, AND MORALS.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

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VOLUME IX.

FIRST AMERICAN EDITION.

CINCINNATI, CHICAGO, AND ST. LOUIS:
CRANSTON & STOWE.
NEW YORK & BOSTON:
HUNT & EATON.

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PREFACE.

In this Volume fresh contributions are made to the branches of the *Present Day Series*, devoted to evolutionary speculation, comparative religion, and the place and claims of Christ. Two Tracts on questions relating to the Lord's Day, and one Tract on the Conflict with Unbelief generally appear. Dr. Cairns shows, in a very convincing manner, the incredibility of the various attempts that have been made to trace Christianity to a merely natural origin. Mr. Lewis shows how Revelation and Science concur in establishing the claim of Christ to be the Crown of the Past and the Key of the Future, and draws the inference that He is moreover the Creator of all.

Dr. Murray Mitchell treats the subject of ancient, but now extinct religions, and shows the unique position held by the Jewish religion among ancient forms of belief, and the relation of Judaism to Christianity.

The Tracts on the Lord's Day are by Sir William Dawson and Dr. Maclear. The former discusses the days of Creation, the true nature of the Sabbath law, the change and significance of the day, and draws some practical conclusions. The latter founds an argument for the reality

of Christ's resurrection on the continuous observance of this day by Christians from the very beginning.

The Editor of the Series gives a bird's-eye view of the whole conflict, the spirit of the combatants, the attitude of the different classes of opponents to Christianity, the chief points of attack and defence, and glances at the nearer and more remote issues of the conflict. The references given in this Tract to the various numbers of the Series will make it serviceable as a guide in the use of the PRESENT DAY TRACTS.

Two of the writers, Mr. Lewis and Mr. Kelly, contribute to the Series for the first time.

The evidence of the great usefulness of these Tracts which comes to light from time to time, and the wide acceptance they have met with everywhere furnish abundant reason for gratitude to God, and encourage the Society to go forward in this work, with the hope and expectation of still fuller and wider blessing upon it.

October, 1887

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IS THE

EVOLUTION OF CHRISTIANITY

FROM

MERE NATURAL SOURCES CREDIBLE?

BY THE

REV. JOHN CAIRNS, D.D.

Argument of the Tract.

The main sources to which evolutionary speculation traces Christianity are examined, and it is shown that it cannot be derived from Greek philosophy, because the resemblances between Christianity and Platonism are found chiefly in that which is not peculiar to Christianity; that they, taken as a whole, amount only to the theistic and ethical pre-suppositions of Christianity; because the distinctive doctrines of Christianity are not to be found in Platonism,—the Incarnation has no place in it,—the Atonement is not foreshadowed in it,—the doctrine of grace, especially in regeneration, has no forecast in it,—there is no Holy Spirit, and so no provision for the new birth as the beginning of the kingdom of God in it; nor does Platonism contain any foresight of the life and work of such a Saviour as enters into the substance of Christianity.

It is further shown that Christianity cannot be derived in a merely human and natural way from the whole of Jewish literature, including the Old Testament, the Apocrypha, and the Talmud, taken together as a mere human formation. The system of Strauss is examined, as the most celebrated discussion of this question in recent controversy.

Its inadequacy is shown, because the scheme credited by Strauss is not Christianity in the proper sense. The Christ of Strauss is incongruous—a defective moral teacher, with a sense of failure and shortcoming toward God, yet capable of aspiring to do the work of a Messiah. Strauss's theory of Christianity subsequent to the point at which Christ left it is proved to be artificial, inadequate, and inconsistent.

It is shown also that Christianity cannot be derived from the Hellenic Judaism of Alexandria, of which Philo is taken as the representative; because the doctrine of the Messiah in the teaching of Philo bears no proportion to its place in the Old Testament; because the doctrine of Atonement is almost wholly lacking; because Philo's doctrine of the Logos in relation to God is wavering and uncertain, and the relation of the Logos to redemption is very scantily set forth by Philo.

The hopelessness of the failure of the most plausible naturalistic theories of the origin of Christianity, and the unique and impregnable position of Christianity is pointed out.

IS THE EVOLUTION OF CHRISTIANITY FROM MERE NATURAL SOURCES CREDIBLE?

BELIEF in Evolution as a principle of natural science has recently made rapid progress, and has been supposed to be capable of solving the greatest physical difficulties. Its range has hardly yet been made so extensive in the spiritual world; and it is rather in the adventurous way in which old problems are dealt with, than in any absolute novelty of method, that any change is visible. It has always been felt to be necessary to give some plausible account of the origin of Christianity short of its divinity. The genesis of systems is a part of history; and if history by the application of its ordinary methods cannot explain this religion, as it does all others, on mere natural principles, it must recognise a miracle. Has this task then, on the anti-supernatural side, been accomplished? If so, out of what pre-existing materials did Christianity by a natural process of development arise? This is the subject of the present Tract, which takes up an inquiry at this day exciting more attention than ever before, and

Progress of the principle of Evolution.

The genesis of systems part of history.

Has Christianit been accounted for by evolution?

gives reasons for holding that Christianity cannot be explained by any natural development.

The various schemes of derivation.

In discussing the subject we shall refer to the various schemes of derivation; and then, on the ordinary principles of historical criticism, seek to test their sufficiency.

Greek philosophy.

Pre-existing Jewish theology and morality.

Philonism.

The main fountain-heads then to which speculations of this kind have endeavoured to trace up Christianity have been Greek philosophy, especially that of Plato; pre-existing Jewish theology and morality, especially the so-called Messianic prophecies of the Jewish faith; and the combination of Greek and Jewish elements found in Alexandrine thought, especially as reflected in Philo. It will be to a brief examination of these sources and tendencies of belief and opinion, in the light of a possible derivation of Christianity from them, that this inquiry will be directed. We shall endeavour, without unfaithfulness to the conditions of strict inquiry, and also of intelligible exposition, to convey the results in a brief sketch.

Christianity not derived from Greek Philosophy.

Alleged derivation from Greek philosophy.

I. Can we find then as the result of our *first* alleged origin, that Christianity can be historically derived from Greek philosophy, and as the question can hardly be proposed in regard to any other

system, specially from that of Plato (B.C. 429–347)? This is anything but a new suggestion. In point of fact, in the first recorded encounter of Greek unbelief with Christianity, the Λόγος Αληθής ("True Word") of Celsus, preserved and replied to by Origen, and written near the end of the second century, the assertion is made and supported by instances, that Christianity is drawn from Platonism. It is not wonderful that Celsus, who understood Christianity very ill, supports this argument but feebly, and that Origen has no difficulty in replying to him, in his sixth book, where this discussion occurs. Thus, for example, among other things Celsus argues that Christ took his celebrated saying, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God," from the utterance of Plato in the fifth book of his Laws, "That for one who is very good also to be very rich is impossible." To which Origen answers, that the point of the remark is greatly weakened in Plato by the absence of the camel, and also that it does not belong to so strict a system as that which laid stress generally on the strait gate and the narrow way. We learn also from this work of Origen that reprisals had already been made on the Platonic philosophy by Christian writers, who traced it back to Hebrew sources, which Plato is supposed to have studied in Egypt; and while Origen, who does not dissent from this

The assertion of Celsus.

The reply of Origen.

Reprisals of Christian writers who traced Platonic philosophy to Hebrew sources.

view, does not practically apply it, we find that it had been attempted at some length before him in a hortatory treatise addressed to the Gentiles (*Cohortatio ad Gentiles*), which has often passed under the name of Justin Martyr, and in which Plato is charged with borrowing his distinction between Being that *is* only and never *becomes* from the name of Jehovah, "I AM THAT I AM," and also with deriving his "ideas" from the pattern showed to Moses in the mount.

Plato's distinction between Being that is and never becomes, said to be borrowed from Moses.

As the summing up of this discussion, in the early period of Christianity, we may mention the elaborate effort of the Church Historian Eusebius, in his great work entitled *The Gospel Preparation* —the fullest dissertation on the relations of Christianity to Paganism and philosophy which has come down from antiquity, and written in the first quarter of the fourth century,—in which three books, X. XI. and XII., are devoted to the proof of the derivation of the Greek philosophy, and specially that of Plato from the Hebrew Scriptures. Here, however, as in the case of the so-called Justin, the plea for Plato's dependence is carried too far. Resemblance is not derivation, unless it be so striking as to necessitate the idea, and unless there be some reasonable hypothesis of contact. Now modern scholars are slow to admit any contact between Plato and Hebrew thought in Egypt. The whole scheme therefore stands or falls with re-

Eusebius derives Platonism from the Hebrew Scriptures.

Resemblance not necessarily derivation.

semblance; and the question between those who with Celsus deduce the Christian faith from Plato, and those who with the early Fathers reverse the process, is just this, Is the resemblance so close as to make the idea of derivation probable, or even irresistible? Something is to be said for and against either view; but it does not follow that either system must be derived from the other. Modern opinion, on the side alike of Christian and non-Christian thought, is against the derivation of Plato. Must it now be held, that we have to go back to Celsus, and accept the evolution from Plato of Christianity? A brief statement of the balance, not merely as it appeared in those early days, but as it suggests itself now, after the conflicts and reactions of centuries, will assist in this decision.

Modern opinion is against the derivation of Plato.

(1.) First, then, it must be said, that *the resemblance between Christianity and Platonism is mostly found in that which is not peculiar to Christianity, viz., natural religion and morality.* Interpreters of all schools are in the main agreed, that in Plato, taking his undoubted works as a whole, the supremacy and unity of God are taught, though with accommodations to polytheism; that His natural attributes stand high; and that His moral attributes of righteousness, and even of benignity, have greater prominence than in any other philosophical system. Further, that while creation in the proper sense is hardly asserted, and there is a dark background

Resemblances between Christianity and Platonism not in the distinctive features of Christianity.

Creation hardly asserted by Plato.

A real beginning and effectual Providence recognised by Plato.

out of which evil may arise, there is a real beginning of existing things due to the highest will and power, and followed by an effectual Providence which is moral in its character, and secures an administration of rewards and punishments, true in this life and perfect in the life to come.

The Platonic doctrine of man.

The Platonic doctrine of man is, that he is in his rational part an image of God and eternal, but through the mystery of union with the body, brought under the conditions of time and sense, so that the contemplation and imitation of the Divine goodness and beauty by love and assimilation are interrupted; but that this still remains the highest good and duty, and may by the struggle of philosophy, embracing all virtues, and aided by death, which is the return to native immortality, be attained. This is a rude outline, as all students of Plato will acknowledge.

Platonism could never have produced Christianity.

But it brings out the fact that this, so far as it goes, could never have created Christianity. Even some of the articles enumerated, such as sin and immortality, have another than Christian setting.

At most it is only the theistic and ethical pre-supposition of Christianity.

But the whole taken together, even granting that it was accurately reproduced in Christianity, is only the theistic and ethical pre-supposition of the Christian religion. It is no more a theory of the development of Christianity out of Platonism, than it is of the development of any other form of monotheism. Nay, Mahommed could with far more ease have got all

he wanted in Plato, than the alleged human authors of Christianity.

The distinctive doctrines of Christianity not in Plato.

The Platonic Logos not personal.

(2.) *Every attempt to find the distinctive doctrines of Christianity in Platonism is a failure.* The doctrine of the Trinity has been most urged; but the resemblance is faint and vanishing. The Platonic Logos has no approach to the personality of the Fourth Gospel. It is only in the Epistles of Plato now generally rejected, that a distinction between a second and a third in relation to Deity is found, or that the word "Father," in possible contrast to "Son" (which last word is not found), occurs.[1] The Neo-Platonic writers, long after Christianity appeared, give a different version of Plato; but their interpretations are not supported by the text, and even their own Trinity is different from the Christian. The fundamental Christian doctrine of the Incarnation, so stupendously inwrought in the New Testament with the Trinity, has no place in Plato; nor could it, consistently with his depreciation of matter. It has never been seriously maintained that the doctrine of Atonement is foreshadowed in Plato; and Archer Butler has pointed to this blank, which he finds also in those Christian theologians who have been most influenced by him.

The Incarnation has no place in Plato.

The Atonement not foreshadowed in Plato.

"They abound with noble thoughts nobly expressed, but they are all marked with the characteristic defect of Platonized

[1] Archer Butler's *History of Ancient Philosophy*, II. p. 38. Note by the late Professor Thompson, of Cambridge.

Christianity,—a forgetfulness, or inadequate commemoration of the most tremendous proof this part of the universe has ever been permitted to witness of the reality of the divine hatred for sin—the fact of the Christian Atonement."[1]

Grace and regeneration not anticipated by Plato.

It is to be added, that the great Christian doctrine of Grace, especially in Regeneration, has no true forecast in Plato. On the human side, there is a change, an awakening, a recovery, and even as in the case of Socrates, something like a divine revelation and help. But as there is no objective redemption in the depth of the Christian sense, and as there is no Holy Spirit, so there is no provision, and could be none, for the new birth as the beginning of the kingdom of heaven; and while it cannot be said that there is quite so great a blank as in regard to the Atonement, for there is everywhere a pathetic sense of necessity and an occasional flash of anticipation, this great regenerator of society relies mainly on personal effort and re-organizations connected with moral education.

The Resurrection not only unknown to, but excluded from, Platonic idealism.

The only other doctrinal difference that needs to be noticed is that bearing on the Resurrection; for as even the immortality of the soul does not rest to Christian faith on an eternal pre-existence of any part of the spirit, so its doctrine of the resurrection of the body, which in connection with that of Christ animates it throughout, is, in the Platonic idealism, not only unknown but excluded.

These irreducible differences are all indefinitely

[1] *History of Ancient Philosophy*, II. p. 308.

increased in their bearing on the problem of a possible derivation of Christianity from Platonism, by the absence of anything in Platonism, corresponding to the life of a Divine Man, or Saviour, or any foresight of the work of such a person, such as enter into the very substance of Christianity. No doubt there are one or two "unconscious prophecies," which, if we grant the common interpretation of Plato, especially in regard to the fate of the perfectly righteous man to be rejected and even crucified (*De Republica*, Book II.) are very remarkable. But even ranking these at the highest, they could never have proved the germ of the Gospel history; nor, without some large anticipation of this, could Platonism have given birth to Christianity. We shall see immediately what can be made of Jewish prophecy in conjunction with it or in addition to it. But those who go on to bring in this, as all must do, really give up the case in regard to Plato; nor is it necessary to raise other difficulties as to how Christ, or other authors of Christianity, treated here from a merely human point of view, could have become acquainted with Plato, or received from his writings the impulse which is required. When they had learned all they were little more than at the beginning of their work, which was to create Christianity, distinctively considered, so far as Greek philosophy was concerned, out of nothing.

Platonism knows nothing of a Divine man or Saviour.

Plato's remarkable references to the fate of the perfectly righteous man could never have given birth to Christianity.

Not necessary to consider whether Christ or other authors of Christianity could have become acquainted with Plato.

Christianity not derived from pre-existing Jewish Interpretations of the Messianic Prophecies.

II. The second alleged source of derivation is the pre-existing Jewish thought, especially as found in Jewish interpretations of the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament.

The alleged derivation of Christianity, in a merely natural way, from Jewish literature as a whole, viewed as a mere human formation.

This might be put in a still wider form, that the whole of Jewish literature, including the Old Testament, the Apocrypha, and other materials, afterwards called Talmudic, taken together, *as a mere human formation*, in the days of Christ and His apostles, *in a merely human and natural way*, originated Christianity. This, no doubt, would be the fullest ground for the discussion of the question. But it is evidently too large to be treated here, and therefore I limit myself to alleged Jewish anticipations of a Messiah; for nothing is so vital, so likely to have originated Christianity on natural principles as this; and there will be few, if any, who, if satisfied that this is insufficient, will fall back on any residual virtue in the Old Testament, or anything that had already gathered round it in Jewish religious history. There is also the great advantage in this limitation, that this ground has been taken definitely in the most celebrated discussion of the question in recent controversy—the *Leben Jesu* (the Life of Jesus) of Strauss in its

The discussion confined to alleged Jewish anticipations of a Messiah.

This ground has been taken by Strauss in his *Leben Jesu*.

different forms, who concentrates his effort to deduce Christianity without the supernatural, on the influence of so-called Jewish interpretations of Old Testament prophecy on the mind of Jesus and His followers. If this scheme can be shown to be inadequate, and anything farther which, in moral and (equally natural) mental working, they may be supposed to have added to it, the question as to the human origin of Christianity must be answered in the negative.

Strauss's views of the life and teaching of Jesus.

Strauss, as is well known, grants a tolerably ascertained body of fact and opinion, making up the historical life and teaching of Jesus. He was, according to Strauss, a wonderfully gifted Teacher and Organizer, not yet surpassed in the history of the world, but essentially a Moralist, who apprehended as never before the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. His teaching lies in the Sermon on the Mount and similar utterances, which fall entirely short of a claim to divinity, though He claimed to be the Jewish Messiah, and expected to survive death and come in the clouds of heaven. While Strauss grants that He foretold His crucifixion, he does not allow that He foretold His resurrection, and regards all His anticipations as to a reign after death as due to enthusiasm. He holds also that Jesus spiritualized the Jewish idea of the Messiah as it stood in His days, and on the basis of it hoped to found a

Strauss denies that Jesus foretold His resurrection.

Strauss's admissions as to the source of Christ's view of His own death.

universal religion for Jews and Gentiles; and he even admits that He may have derived from the Old Testament prophecies, a view of His own death as an atonement for sin, and in this sense (though the fact is not certain) instituted the Lord's supper.

A natural origin of Christianity cannot be found either at the point where Christ left it or from the point at which His disciples developed it.

Such is the view of Strauss regarding the Christianity which Jesus Himself held, and which was afterwards added to by His followers. Can it be said then, either *first*, that we find here a natural origin of Christianity at the point where Christ Himself left it, or *secondly*, that we find such an origin when Christianity comes to be developed from this point by His disciples? Each of these questions must be answered unhesitatingly in the negative.

The scheme of Strauss is not Christianity.

First, it must be said, without granting that the Old Testament was human to begin with, *that the religious scheme with which Christ is credited by Strauss is not in the proper sense Christianity.* If it be not Christianity that is originated, the whole labour of Strauss falls to the ground. It may be readily enough granted, that it was not in the nature of things impossible for Jesus, as Strauss conceives Him, to have risen up a great moral Teacher, and to have found much nourishment for His moral and religious sensibilities in the Old Testament. It may also be granted that such a Teacher would be likely to enter with peculiar depth into the Old Testament doctrine of a Messiah, and would spiri-

What may be admitted.

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tualize that conception and hope, in such a way as to take it entirely out of the region of mere temporal conquest and influence. It may be even by a stretch credible, that a great and profoundly reverent spirit might regard this Messiah as needing to suffer and atone for sin: for this was undoubtedly in the text of the prophecies—no matter how it came there—and a faithful student, even in a dark, carnal, and self-righteous age, might recover his hold over the original. But where we are compelled to part company with Strauss, is where he supposes it possible that a mere man so great and pure, approaching faultless excellence, yet not reaching it, such as he conceives Jesus to have been, could have believed *Himself* to be that wonderful Messiah, or held language as to His approaching sacrifice, or instituted any memorial of it. This is to do the work of Christianity without a Christian instrument: for Christianity does not need any kind of so-called Messiah,—it cannot proceed even with a sinless one,—who is not Divine, and as Strauss has planted no consciousness of the Divine in Jesus, drawn from the Old Testament, but even denied his sinlessness, and seen in his disclaimer of the good in Himself[1] the confession of an "unremoved discord"[2] between Himself and God, it cannot be said that there is here any real passage from the Old Testament to Christianity.

The Christ of Strauss incredible.

Christianity cannot dispense with a Divine Saviour.

[1] Mark x. 18. [2] Bruch.

The incongruity of the Christ of Strauss.

The Christ of Strauss is thus quite incongruous—not only a defective teacher (however great) as he admits, but a personality with a sense of failure and shortcoming toward God, yet capable of aspiring to the work of a Messiah and of becoming the Christ of all ages.[1] Such a position at once falls. No suggestion from the Old Testament, or possible prophecies that may have inspired, instead of rebuking, such a career, can be regarded.

The arbitrary way in which Strauss makes the Old Testament act on the mind of Jesus.

It may be added here, that it is remarkable in how arbitrary a way Strauss makes the Old Testament act on the mind of Jesus, so as to determine on the one hand His actual, on the other His mythical history. According to Strauss Jesus knows all the prophecies respecting a forerunner to the Messiah, and yet has no relations with John the Baptist, to whom He owes no more than to the Essenes. He knows all that seems to be spoken of the Messiah as the Son of David, yet never lays claim to that title and discourages the use of it. He is acquainted with the long-standing prophetic tradition as to the Messiah riding into Jerusalem; but Strauss supposes it more likely that Jesus took in this part of His expected work as the Messiah no special interest, and that the narrative may be due to the colouring of the evangelists. And once more, prophecy moves Jesus to expect and to announce His own death to His disciples,

[1] *Leben Jesu*, 1864, p. 202.

in terms of the 53rd of Isaiah; but though that oracle or the 16th Psalm might have suggested a resurrection, not one word of this was breathed to them. It may be said that in these and other cases, it was the dread of the supernatural that kept Strauss back: for had he freely granted that Jesus in all these cases fulfilled the Old Testament idea, or Himself prophesied, it would have compelled him to acknowledge miracle. Yet on the other hand, Strauss undoubtedly grants what looks very like fulfilment of prophecy in the death of Jesus; so that his result is made all the more incoherent by his own concessions, and is not so much a deduction of Christianity in the actual life of Jesus, as a fanciful application and rejection of the Old Testament in the genesis of that life by turns.

The deterrent effect of the dread of the supernatural on Strauss.

Strauss's concessions make his result incoherent.

Secondly, it must be added, that *the theory by which Strauss supplements Christianity as derived, beyond the point where Christ left it, is not more tenable.* His work is to bridge over the gap where he confessedly leaves Christ, with a simpler and purer Christianity, till the Gospels were written, and Christianity with them was corrupted, about the middle of the second century. He still holds by his main source, and in reply to the objection, that even this is too short a time for the transformation of histories into anything, he says that

The theory whereby Strauss supplements Christianity as left by Christ untenable.

"They did not rise first in this age, but their first foundation was already before and after the Babylonian exile; the trans-

ference of all this, with its dogmatic modification, went on all through the centuries till Jesus; and the time from the gathering of the first Church till the rise of the Gospels, was the period of the application of the mostly already formed Messianic legends to him." [1]

The briefest criticism is all that can be allowed to this scheme of the transformation of Christ's life and doctrine by His followers into what is now Christianity.

The artificiality of Strauss's process.

(1.) It may be remarked, first, that the process is very *artificial.* So long as Strauss is criticising the supernatural features and apparent contradictions of the Gospels, his arguments have some plausibility; but the moment he becomes a system-builder of myths, everything becomes strained, and often dull. Among the myths of the Infancy are, according to him, that the Messiah was to be the Son of David; hence, Strauss holds, that the disciples acted on by their mistaken readings of prophecy, and all through, in the face of history, taught the literal descent of Jesus from David, His birth in Bethlehem, and His baptism by John, like David's anointing by Samuel. So the Messiah was to be the Son of God, and thus the way is opened for the miraculous conception, for the "Wisdom" of God in Jesus, like that in Proverbs, for the blending of Greek philosophy as to "sons of God" with Hebrew, and for the Divine predicates in Paul's Epistles in Hebrews, and in the

The teaching of the disciples according to Strauss.

[1] First *Leben Jesu,* 1835, p. 113.

Gospel of John—in all of which, however, it is to be said there is very little derivation by Strauss from the Old Testament. A very contorted part of the process is the parallel between Jesus and Moses, like whom He has to escape danger in His youth,—as like him and Samuel, to be early awake to His destiny; and then the parallel is closed, not between Jesus and Moses, but between Him and the people, who did not overcome, but fell in the wilderness. The public life follows the infancy, bringing up other mythical parallels with the prophets, in having disciples, in healing, feeding, restoring to life, though many of the works of Jesus have no parallel, and are accompanied by discourses quite peculiar. Strauss labours hard to find something like the cursing of the fig-tree, and the transfiguration as modelled after the shining face of Moses. The scenes in the last sufferings and death have little parallelism with older history, and are founded, he says, on oracles misapplied, and scattered utterances made to converge, such as "Smite the Shepherd;" "A bone of Him shall not be broken." The Resurrection and Ascension, equally helped, pass, at the hands of the disciples, into the Gospel narrative, and colour Christian doctrine.

The parallel between Jesus and Moses.

The cursing of the barren fig-tree.

The narrative of the sufferings and death.

(2.) A second and still more fatal objection to the mythical scheme is that it is *wholly inadequate*. If our Lord's disciples were not more advanced in their views of the personal greatness of Jesus than

The inadequacy of the mythical scheme.

Strauss supposes them to have been, how could they emerge from the terrible catastrophe of His crucifixion? The vision hypothesis of the Resurrection held by Strauss is not sufficient. They not only had to recover their faith in Him as the Messiah. They had to rise to the view of His Deity. They had to develop the germ of a doctrine of Atonement found in His teaching, from which the narrative represents them as before estranged. They had to connect this doctrine of Atonement with His Deity, and to make this the centre of Christianity, turning the cross which was the shame into the glory of the new system. There is no room left for such a transformation in their hands, bowed down as they were with grief and disappointment. There is every evidence that these doctrines constituted their first preaching. The Apostle Paul is almost immediately in the field with written testimonies, whose genuineness is unquestioned, and every effort to disconnect him from their Christianity is a failure, since Strauss himself describes the Apostle as converted by and in sympathy with the first Church. How then could Jesus, so much smaller than the Apostles made Him, nothing more, according to Strauss, than a great moralist, with no miracle, prophecy, or ray of true divinity, so dazzle these fishermen of Galilee? How could He turn them by the magic of His influence into the great theologians

The insufficiency of the vision hypothesis

What the disciples had to do.

Their first preaching.

St. Paul's conversion.

How could the Christ of Strauss have so transformed the disciples?

and reformers of the world—the creators even of Himself, as He has been commonly believed in—and enable them in a few brief days and weeks when left without Him, to bring out of the whole Old Testament what they had never found in it before, the transcendent and glorified image of His eternal greatness, condescension, love, and victory? This is the radical difficulty in the heart of the mythical theory; and the common view which brings the same Christ out of it from the beginning alike to Jesus and His disciples, but with Him both fulfilling and interpreting it as a Divine book, and leading the way, has here by every argument the stamp of nature and of reality.

The difficulty in the heart of the mythical theory insoluble.

(3.) Thirdly, this scheme of Strauss as to the mythical derivation and exaggeration of Christianity is *inconsistent*. Why does Jesus, who so fascinates His disciples, and leads them to see in every Old Testament nook and cranny some reflection of His greatness, leave His impress so shadowy that it can be moulded, if not into the opposite, into the immense disfigurement of Himself? Why is Christ, the grandest of teachers, the least able to regulate His own followers, so that they disport themselves on His grave, and celebrate ere long for the Man of Nazareth the *alter ego* of the divinity? Strauss affirms that had Jesus returned to the earth, He would not by the time of the fall of Jerusalem have recognized His own

Strauss's scheme inconsistent.

Christ, according to Strauss, at once fascinates His disciples and fails to regulate them.

image. How could such a vacillating faith have ever conquered the world, when it could not hold its own best disciples? It has been said that diseases of the lungs could be healed if the organ would only find rest. But here is a Christianity suffering from the first with this disease of change, yet working on and setting all the functions of reproduction even better when transmuted by His disciples than in the days of Christ Himself. Strauss has here the weakness of his own scheme, and hence his bitterness against the Christian world, which has preferred to accept a risen and living, rather than a naturalistic, Christ. And hence, too, his ultimate despair of religion altogether in his *Der alte und der neue Glaube*, in which every reading not only of Christianity, but of Theism the mystical theory included is abandoned, and the course of the world wrapped up in a succession of catastrophes without any continuous history.

Christianity not derived from Alexandrian Religious Judaism.

III. We come to the third and last alleged source of Christianity in the way of natural development, the mixture of Hellenic and Jewish thought found in Alexandria, and especially in the writings of Philo. In this Tract Philo may be con-

sidered alone; for if the connexion is disproved in regard to him it can be maintained in regard to no other. Now in regard to Philo, it may be said that he is a high and noble figure in the history of human thought; that there is in him a true Hebrew side, which far beyond Plato secures approximation to and coincidences with Christianity, and that there is even one doctrine of his creed, which to a degree without any parallel elsewhere seems to ally him with distinctive Christianity—his doctrine of the Logos. But it must not less be contended that Philo is, when all has been considered, a quite inadmissible origin of Christianity; and the present writer, after a careful reading of his works and some study of what has been written by others, is more than ever convinced of the hopelessness of the scheme of those, who, like Bolingbroke and Voltaire in last century, and like Strauss and Zeller, with far superior learning in our own, have held that there is a real and vital connexion between not only Platonic thought generally, but also Philonism and Christianity. In farther discussing this interesting question, it may be a suitable method to examine *first*, the approximations of Philo to Christianity, other than those alleged in regard to the Logos. Then, *secondly*, to set forth the confessed or little doubted divergencies; and then, *thirdly*, in the light of these extremes, so to speak,

Philo's Hebrew side.

His doctrine of the Logos connects him with Christianity.

The connexion between Philonism and Christianity not vital.

and of its own meaning, to estimate the so-called Logos doctrine in its possible fitness to have suggested or originated Christianity.

Approximations of Philo to Christianity.

1. There fall then first to be considered the *approximations of Philo to Christianity.* These are often under-estimated by writers of the very school who suppose the influence of Philo to have been greatest. They love to think of him as little better than a Greek and as a reflection more or less pale of Greek civilization and philosophy.

His nationality

But in point of fact his national feeling is deep and ineradicable. As the philosophical Jew in Germany is not a German, neither was Philo in Alexandria a Greek. No doubt Greek culture had done much from the days of Alexander the Great to those of Philo—whose period was 20 B.C.–54 A.D.—to transform externally and superficially the mind of the Jew of the dispersion; but in his deepest heart he was still a child of Abraham, and the Old Testament was more to him than all philosophy. We see with what keenness Philo enters into the quarrels of the Alexandrine mob and the Jews, with what satisfaction he depicts the remorse of the tyrannic proconsul Flaccus, with what patriotic sympathy he enters upon his embassy to Caligula (A.D. 39) to obtain the removal of the idol from the temple at Jerusalem. Rationalistic critics fail to see this leading feature. Neander—himself a Jew—has seized it, and

His patriotic sympathy with the Jews.

shown that with all his singular interpretations, Philo was yet a true child of the Old Testament, and therefore had a place in preparing for the New.

Philo a child of the Old Testament.

This approach to Christianity lies, *first*, in the *genuine supernaturalism of Philo's teaching.* He accepts quite literally the fact of the Deluge, the appearance of angels to Abraham, the fasting of Moses forty days and nights; and he admits prophecy as well as miracle, such as the pre-announcement of the destruction of Pharaoh in the Red Sea, of the descent of the manna, and of the death of Korah and his company.[1] He quite understands the peculiarity of Judaism as based upon a revelation; and his doctrine of inspiration would now be regarded as even rigorous.

He accepts the supernatural.

He understands Judaism to be based on a revelation.

It has been justly said that his excessive allegorizing is in one sense due to this idea of the origin of Judaism; for as the literal sense seems to him often inadmissible, he has recourse to the most violent and mystical interpretations in order to preserve his reverence for what he regarded as an incomparably deep and divine book. The most of his writings are indeed commentaries on the Pentateuch, written with as profound belief in the text, as that of Origen, whom in his allegorizings he so much resembles; and when, as in his *Life of Moses*, it is otherwise, the same devotion to that great prophet is apparent, whom he exalts above every

His allegorizing due to his doctrine of inspiration.

His devotion to Moses.

[1] *De Vita Mosis*, III. § 34–38.

law-giver or philosopher of mere human authority, and supposes to have been so fully inspired, that in the end of this work he declares him to have predicted and recorded in Deuteronomy his own death and burial by supernatural means. Nor can I admit with Professor Schürer, in his article on Philo, in the current edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, that this recognition of Mosaic authority is merely formal, and that Philo accepts the laws of Moses because they seem to him inwardly reasonable and cosmopolitan, and thus to agree with the universal religion and morality which had been so far reached by Greek philosophers. This is not consistent with his condemnations and denunciations of the Pagan world, including the philosophers. Nor is it consistent with Professor Schürer's own acknowledgment:

His recognition of Moses not formal only.

> "Above all, his whole works prove on every page that he felt himself to be thoroughly a man, and desired to be nothing else. Jewish 'philosophy' is to him the true and highest wisdom; the knowledge of God and of things divine and human, which is contained in the Mosaic Scriptures is to him the deepest and the purest."

Philo's doctrine of Theism.

The approach of Philo to Christianity may be said to lie, *secondly*, in a *purer doctrine of Theism*. This cannot be said save in contrast with philosophy, for there are points where Philo is distinctly below the Old Testament. Thus the doctrine of creation is less pronounced in his commentaries than in the original; and he has allowed

Creation.

himself to borrow from Plato or some other source, a certain dark background of negation, from which evil may be derived, and not from God. This is also true in regard to his high metaphysical view of God as the τὸ ὄν (the Being that truly is), whose nature is ideal unity, incompatible with any human apprehension of his separate attributes. But this is only a transient speculation, which has too much re-appeared even in schools of Christian theology, and does not darken the general clearness of his reflexion of the Old Testament view of the Divine character. It is indeed a grand and lofty representation which Philo on the whole gives; and nothing like it is to be found in Plato, or any of the philosophers. The strictness of monotheism is preserved inviolate, and the folly, blasphemy, and degradation of idolatry are everywhere brought home. The high attributes of eternity, immensity, and immutability are maintained. If the power of God is theoretically limited in regard to creation, it is practically asserted, and also in harmony with wisdom in regard to both creation and providence. The reign of moral government, on the side both of justice and benignity is upheld, and with conspicuous ability defended. The God of Philo is also a Father who pities His children, who helps their infirmities and forgives their iniquities, who hears their prayers, and who makes their return to

Origin of evil.

His view of God.

Strictness of his monotheism.

Moral government.

The Fatherhood of God.

The personality of God.

and enjoyment of Himself their chief good. The personality of God is thus as truly vindicated in Philo, as in the Old Testament. Any one can judge how much this means, who is acquainted at this point with the downfall of the Greek and especially of the Stoical philosophy. Even Plato has been charged, probably unjustly, with a shade of Pantheism; but in Philo no such trace appears.

Philo's doctrine of practical piety and virtue.

Defect in his system.

The *third* and last point to be noticed in Philo's approaches to Christianity lies *in his earnest doctrine of practical piety and virtue.* There is no doubt one grievous defect in his system, which he so far shares with Plato, his false doctrine of the relation of evil to the body, darkening and confusing his whole scheme of the blessed life, and of recovery to it. He cannot justly be charged with holding an eternal pre-existence of the soul, or an indefinite series of transmigrations. And practically the pre-existence of the soul does not mean much more with him than that it comes direct from God and is united to a different element. But in his view of this different element of sense, as related to temptation, as affecting duty, and as making him cold and silent in regard to the resurrection of the body, there is only too large an infusion of non-Christian thought. Still, practically his better side, which is in harmony with the Old Testament, here predominates, and makes him a true and earnest teacher, not only of natural virtue, but of

His better side, which is in harmony with the Old Testament, predominates.

recovery to God by repentance and faith on the basis of God's own revelation and covenant. His beautiful work on the Decalogue sets up a high standard of duty, whereby through the law there may come the knowledge of sin. As his doctrine of sense is connected with free-will, and does not make the subjection of the soul to the body necessary, there is room for a large and wide and often graphic exposure of all the cheats and delusions by which the soul is separated from God. The reality of the fall is thus brought home, with the need of what, though it may not be called by that name, is really a spiritual birth. "Repentance" (*τὸ μετανοεῖν*) is enforced in a tract under that name; and in connexion with this and with return to God, the two adjectives are applied to the penitent, which correspond, though vaguely to the Christian ideas of justification (*θεοφῐλής*) and sanctification (*φῐλόθεος*). Faith also is urged; and the same Pauline text[1] is quoted as the highest encomium of Abraham; nay in the close of the same treatise on Abraham, there is a eulogy of faith (though far inferior) in the strain of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Nor is the doctrine of Divine grace and influence wanting, although in definite connexion with a personal Spirit, it is still almost below the horizon. These facts are to be noticed in Philo, because rationalistic writers, seeing no difference

His standard of duty.

His doctrine of sense.

The reality of the fall and the need of repentance.

Faith required

The doctrine of Divine grace.

[1] Gen. xv. 6; Rom. iv. 3.

Rationalists have generally overlooked Philo's approximations to Christianity.

between regeneration and natural virtue, have generally overlooked them, and have ranked this writer more as a heathen moralist than as an Old Testament believer, often mistaken, but earnest and sincere—and thus already on the road to Christianity.

Philo's divergencies from the Old Testament.

2. But now, *secondly*, in justice to our argument as to derivation or non-derivation, we have to take Philo on the opposite side, and see how far he has gone back even from the Old Testament, as a foreshadowing of Christianity. It will hardly be denied that here in some unaccountable, but yet only too visible a movement, we have a recession of the tide, and find ourselves in the shallows. This affects two points of Philo's doctrine; but these of the gravest import — his view of the Messiah and his view of Sacrifice. If he is here out of harmony even with the Old Testament, how can he be the creator, direct or indirect, of Christianity?

The doctrine of the Messiah much in the shade in Philo.

(1.) Let us begin with his *Doctrine of the Messiah*. This is comparatively easy to ascertain, and need not occupy us long. All must admit that this doctrine is in Philo from first to last singularly in the shade, and bears no proportion to its place in the Old Testament. There is no mention of the Messiah in the way of reference to any parts of the Old Testament beyond the books of Moses. There is no allusion to the references to Him in

Genesis, as *e.g.*, to the seed of the woman,[1] or to the seed of Abraham,[2] save only in the handling of the latter text, in the vaguest way, or to the Shiloh.[3] The only Messianic passages distinctly referred to are two, one in Numbers[4] where a King is spoken of "higher than Agag," and afterwards as "a star out of Jacob." The passage comes in near the end of the tract of Philo, on "Rewards and Punishments," where the promise of help to Israel in war, and of help so effectual as in the latter day to secure its abolition, is considered.

Two Messianic passages only distinctly referred to by Philo

"For a man shall come, says the oracle (Numbers xxiv. 7), leading and making war, and shall subdue great and populous nations, God sending to His saints the fitting help. This is the invincible courage of souls, and most vigorous strength of bodies, each of which is formidable to enemies, and where they are combined, perfectly irresistible."[5]

"Higher than Agag—" "Star out of Jacob."

The only other reference is to Deut. xviii. 15—22 (there is, however, no quotation), where Philo, at the end of his first Book on the Theocracy, thus speaks of the promise of Moses:—

"He says that, if they are truly pious, they shall not want knowledge of the future: but a certain prophet suddenly appearing, and divinely inspired, shall foretell and prophecy to them, saying nothing of His own, for then He shall not be able to receive it as one truly possessed and in a state of enthusiasm; but what He utters he shall repeat as from the suggestion of

The prophet like unto Moses.

[1] Gen. iii. 15. [2] Gen. xxii. 16. [3] Gen. xlix. 10.

[4] Numbers xxiv. 7, or perhaps 17.

[5] *De Praemiis*, II. 424. Mangey's Edition. For all translations from the Greek or Latin, the writer is responsible.

another; for the prophets are the interpreters of God, who uses them as instruments for the disclosure of His will."[1]

How small a part the doctrine of the Messiah as such had in the theology of Philo is evident when these are all the specific references to such a King and Prophet in his voluminous works. It is true, indeed, that there are hopes connected in the Prophets, with a general Messianic period, which Philo accepts and embodies. These are almost entirely limited to two passages. The one is founded upon Isaiah xi., where he accepts as literal the transformation of the venomous and destructive creatures, and as connected with it the cessation of war among men.[2] The other passage is a reminiscence of Deut. xxx., where Philo describes the sudden change in Israel's fortunes, and their return from their last captivity, emancipated by their conquerors, who are astonished at the conversion which they have experienced:—

Hopes connected with a Messianic period accepted by Philo.

Transformation of venomous creatures and cessation of war.

The change in Israel's fortunes.

"When they have obtained this unlooked for deliverance, who shortly before were scattered in Greece and among the Barbarians over islands and continents, rising with one impulse, they march from all different sides to the one region that has been revealed to them, guided by a higher than mortal vision, unshared by others, and disclosed only to the rescued themselves."[3]

No call of the Gentiles in Philo.

Grand, however, as these passages are, there is not in Philo any proper call of the Gentiles, even

[1] *De Monarchia*, II. 222. Mangey.

[2] *De Praemiis*, II., 422. [3] *De Execrationibus*, II., 436.

in a Messianic age. It is the Jews who return, and who continue and perpetuate for ever, as he elsewhere tells us, those Jewish sacrifices in Jerusalem, which are already, according to him, offered for all the world. No doubt, proselytism must be included in his conceptions; but he dwells little on it, and thus the result of the Messiah's work is feeble and unimpressive in his scanty references, in comparison with the majestic pictures of the Psalms and Prophets with which he must have been familiar.

Proselytism included in his conceptions; but he dwells little on it.

(2.) More adverse, however, to the hypothesis of derivation, than this slender and even stunted form of the doctrine in Philo of the Messiah, is the almost entire want in him of the distinctively Christian doctrine of *atonement* or *sacrifice*. It is not even easy to reconcile this with full Judaism; but it seems impossible to reconcile it with the giving of a large impulse to Christianity.

The distinctively Christian doctrine of atonement almost entirely wanting in Philo's writings.

It cannot be said that Philo lacks the sense of the evil of sin. He looks on human nature as truly fallen; and some of his pictures recall the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. There must be a discovery of disease and an earnest flight from it, not without Divine help. By the use of a very powerful figure, he describes the supreme importance of this by supposing a physician to enter a great house or palace, and regardless of the splendour of the building, the attendants, the fur-

Human nature viewed by him as fallen.

niture, and of the carved bed on which the patient lies, to care only for the beating of his pulse, and the special remedies which he requires.[1] But unhappily Philo looks too much on sin as disease, and too little as a violation of law demanding expiation. Hence the great remedy for sin which he everywhere urges and exalts is repentance, as when he says, "Repentance is the younger brother of innocence."[2] It is then hard for Philo to give any explanation of the Old Testament sacrifices. The idea of guilt being transferred and imputed has hardly a place in his theology; and in dealing with the burnt-offering, and the laying of the hands of the offerer upon it, he treats this rite, not as a confession of sin, but as a protestation of innocence:—

Sin regarded as disease rather than as violation of law by Philo.

The transfer and imputation of guilt has hardly any place in his theology.

> "These hands have not received any gift of unrighteousness, or fruit of violence and covetousness, nor have they touched innocent blood."[3]

No doubt Philo says this of the burnt-offering, which, with the peace-offering, he treats as purely eucharistic; but this explanation of the rite is contrary to Leviticus,[4] where the laying on of the hands is interpreted in the annual sin-offering, as the putting of the transgressions of Israel "on the head of the goat;" nor can Philo apply an emblem so significant, with a totally different

The burnt and peace offerings viewed by him as purely eucharistic.

[1] *Fragment on Providence*, II., 638.

[2] Τὸ μετανοεῖν ἀδελφὸν νεώτερον ὂν τοῦ μηδ ὅλως ἁμαρτεῖν. I. 634.

[3] *De Animal. Sacrific. usu.* I., 242. [4] Levit. xvi. 21.

meaning, to alleged different sacrifices. When he comes to the sin-offering, he cannot get rid of the idea, that the pardon is in some way by the will of God dependent on the sacrifice; but he still falls back on the efficacy of repentance:

While regarding pardon as in some way dependent on the sacrifice, in treating the sin-offering he falls back on the efficacy of repentance.

"For somehow the penitent is saved, when he regards the disease of the soul as worse than the sufferings of the body" (II. 248).

There is no trace at all in Philo, that the blood of the victim atones, because, according to so many Jewish interpretations of Leviticus,[1] as the vehicle of life, it denotes the giving of one life for another. Nor is there any reaching forward to any typical idea of a higher sacrifice to come; for Philo expressly says:

No trace of atonement by blood in Philo.

"Victims slaughtered for the offence of the high priest or people, as already said, are not eaten, but wholly consumed by fire, *for there is no one better than the high priest or the people, who shall be a deprecator of sins.*"[2]

As Philo can see nothing expiatory in the victims, the symbolism of sacrifice becomes a mere set of moral lessons to the offerers, for, speaking of the unblemished nature of the animals, he says,

The symbolism of sacrifice a set of moral lessons to the offerers, according to him.

"He wishes to teach them by these emblems to bring no weakness or disease or passion in their own soul, but to keep it in everything perfectly pure, so as not to repel God, who sees the heart."[3]

He wanders still further away, even from the

[1] Levit. xvii. 11. [2] *De Animal. Sacrific. idon.* II. 249.
[3] *De Animal. Sacrific. idon.* II. 239.

Philo connects the ritual of sacrifice with general cosmical relations.

moral view of the atonement, by connecting the ritual of sacrifice with general cosmical relations, so that every part of the High Priest's dress is allegorized, the robe in particular representing the three lower elements, the ephod, heaven, and the twelve names on the breast-plate, not the twelve tribes of Israel, but the twelve signs of the Zodiac.[1] It is not possible to see in such a symbolism anything but a great recession from the true meaning of the Old Testament; though Philo, with his wonderful power of holding both to the literal and the spiritual, no doubt strove in his own mind to combine both. But it was not possible for such a scheme ever to originate, even by suggestion, the New Testament view of atonement, where everything bears so strictly on Christ as the true High Priest and as the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world. All schools of thought, worth any consideration, accept the Epistle to the Hebrews as from the first representing an integral and vital part of Christianity; and we have seen that even Jesus, according to Strauss, interpreted the 53rd of Isaiah in this sense, and thus sanctioned a view which, while including all that is true in the eucharistic and ethical views of Philo, goes unspeakably deeper to hold forth the giving of his life as a "ransom for many" (λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν). Let it be added that, according to Philo

Philo's scheme could never originate or even suggest the New Testament view of atonement.

[1] *De Vita Mosis*, II. 154.

the whole sacrificial system, including the Temple and its revenues, shall last for ever (ἐφ' ὅσον τὸ ἀνθρώπων γένος διαμενεῖ[1]) and we see another great discord between this scheme and the Christian view of the appearing of Christ, "once in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

Philo regards the sacrificial system, including the Temple and its revenues, as perpetual.

3. We come then, as our *third*, and not least important inquiry, to take up Philo in regard to his doctrine of the Logos, or Word of God, in which he has been represented as the most distinctively Christian, and as having said enough to originate that part of the doctrine of the New Testament which was ultimately moulded by Christian theology into the special article of the Second Person of the Godhead in the scheme of the Trinity and Incarnation. I do not think that this view can be supported by facts; but it is also possible, as has sometimes been done, to underrate the coincidences of Philo with the New Testament, and the degree to which, beyond any Jewish writer, he had developed the hints and forecastings of Old Testament teaching on this head. Still, it cannot be held with any fairness that Philo has anticipated the New Testament ideas; and this will appear when the two leading facts are considered, *first*, that he has a wavering doctrine of the personality of the Logos in relation

His doctrine of the Logos could not have originated the Christian doctrine of the Second Person of the Godhead.

Philo's doctrine of the personality of the Logos in relation to God wavering.

[1] *De Monarchia*, II. 224.

to God; and *secondly*, that the Logos in his writings has a very scanty relation to redemption.

Philo's doctrine of the personality of the Logos radically different from the Christian.

(1.) *First*, then, *the doctrine of Philo as to the personality of the Logos in relation to God is wavering and uncertain*, and thus it radically differs from the Christian. The number of passages in all Philo where the Logos of God is spoken of in any sense (as I have counted them) is sixty-two; but there may be one or two more or less. Now the question arises, how far Philo meant by the Logos of God, a distinct personality, and how far a mere general name for God, under the aspect of the fountain of reason, or it may be sometimes of speech, without implying any personal distinction in the Godhead. The same difficulty, it is well known, arises in interpreting the earlier extra-Biblical Jewish literature, which in treating of the angel of God, or the wisdom of God (as in Gen. xlviii. 16, or Prov. viii. 22–31), came to use various traditional names, of which "*Word* of Jehovah" (Chaldee, *Memra*) stands nearest to the nomenclature of Philo. The language of Philo himself is so indistinct that it is not easy to classify his passages, but I have put down thirty-six as capable of being reconciled with the idea of abstraction or personification, or some other hypothesis, while only twenty-six seem, with any clearness, to speak of the Logos as distinct from God. I shall give one or two samples of the former, and dwell at

The indistinctness of Philo's language in most passages concerning the relation of the Logos to God.

greater length upon the latter, as only upon them can an identification of Philonism with Christianity be attempted.

Passages in Philo which do not separate the Logos from God

Thus, in the very first passage that occurs in Philo's works, it means nothing when it is said that God used, as the pattern of all things that He arranged, His own Logos, and that the beauty of the universe is due to this reflexion.[1] So in other passages, as where it is said that the soul of man is "marked with the seal of God, of which the print is the everlasting Logos."[2] Nor does it separate the Logos from God when it is said that "He waters the virtues" as the river of paradise, that is parted into four heads;[3] nor when it is declared that "the Divine Logos equally divides the manna to all who use it.[4] There is also a class of statements where the Logos, seeming to be distinguished from the Father, is immediately identified with Him, as where it is said, "He is the Logos of the Eternal," but it is added that men

Passages which seem to distinguish but immediately identify the Logos with the Father.

"rejoicing in one race, and honouring one Father, the right Logos, lead a bright and cheerful life."[5]

The allegorizing style of Philo

So also in a style of evident allegorization, since God as Father, with knowledge as mother, produces the sensible universe, so the Logos as Father, with education as mother, begets four kinds of leaders

[1] *De Mundi Opif.* I. 33. [2] *De Plantatione Noe*, I. 333.
[3] *De Post. Caini*, I. 250. [4] *Quis Rerum Div. Heres*, I. 500.
[5] *De Confus. Ling.* I. 411.

Samples of Philo's looseness in holding personal distinctions.

of men.[1] And to crown all, in this same strain, the Logos is mentioned as second in a series of powers, of which Being in general is the first; while creative power, with benignity, come in as the third and fourth; regal power, with legislative, as the fifth and sixth; and the seventh and last is the intelligible universe.[2] Such examples show us with how loose a hand Philo holds personal distinctions; and he even tells us that we may mistake a ray for the sun, as Hagar an angel for God, and that the apparent Trinity, as in Genesis xviii., in the visitants of Abraham, may be due to the weakness of vision, especially as the patriarch addressed them as One.

More distinctively Christian aspects of Philo's doctrine of the Logos.

But now it would be doing injustice to Philo to suppose that there was nothing that had a more Christian look in his Logos doctrine; and the other side, in which, in a less numerous set of passages, he endeavours to set forth a real distinctness between God and the Logos, and also the relation between them is now to be considered. Thus he speaks of the Logos as a second God, or "second to God;" "the most generic is God, and second the Logos of God."[3] And again he says on Gen. ix. 6, regarding man as made in the image of God;

"for nothing mortal could be formed after the likeness of the

[1] *De Ebrietate*, I. 362. [2] Armenian *In Exodum* (II. 515. Aucher).
[3] *Legis Allegor*, I. 82.

Supreme Father of the universe, but after the norm of the second God, who is His Word." [1]

There are also four remarkable texts in which the Logos is called his Son. Thus on Zech. vi. 12, where the subject is the "Branch,"

Passages in Philo in which the Logos is called God's Son.—On Zech. vi. 12, etc.

"for this eldest Son the Father of the universe made to spring forth, whom He elsewhere called First-born; and He, when begotten, imitating the ways of the Father, looking to his archetypal patterns fashioned the species of things." [2]

Again, in the same book of Philo:

"Let Him strive to be adorned after His first-begotten Logos, the eldest angel, subsisting as a many-named archangel: for He is called beginning, and name of God, and Logos, and the model Man, and seeing Israel." [3]

Once more, in a striking paraphrase of the 23rd Psalm, which, however, is not applied to the Church, but to the universe, Philo thus speaks:

Paraphrase of the 23rd Psalm.

"Having set up His right Logos, His only begotten Son, who shall assume the charge of this sacred flock, as a certain deputy of a great King." [4]

The last of these passages, where the word "Son" is expressly used, is in speaking in *The Life of Moses* of the work of the High Priest:

The word "Son" used in his *Life of Moses.*

"For it was necessary that He who was consecrated to the Father of the universe, should make use, as a Paraclete, of a Son, most perfect in virtue, both for the amnesty of sins, and supply of most liberal blessings." [5]

Similar to this Christian-like idea of Sonship is

[1] *In Genesin* (II. 148. Aucher).
[2] *De Confus. Ling*, I. 415. [3] *Ibid.* I. 427.
[4] *De Agricultura.* I. 308. [5] *De Vita Mosis* (II. 156.)

The Father said to be the "Fountain" of the Son.

another expression, destined often to recur afterwards in Christian theology, where the Father was said to be the "Fountain" of the Son. "God rules, who is the fountain of the eldest Logos."[1] Not on the same plane of elevation, but still remarkable are the passages which, in dealing with Old Testament texts, speak of the Logos as an angel. Thus in reference to angelic warning, as in the case of Balaam:[2]

The Logos spoken of as an angel.

"The Logos is the Divine Angel that leads us, and that takes obstacles out of our path."[3]

The Word regarded as Mediator.

And in connexion with the same idea, that of Mediator comes in:

"Of necessity the Word, which is called Angel, is constituted as it were Arbiter, and Mediator."[4]

The title Loges connected with moral operations, but more commonly in relation to creation and providence.

This title of the Logos is connected with moral operations; but a more common representation of His function as something intermediate, is in relation to creation and providence, as an instrument divinely used:

"The shadow of God is His Logos, using which as an instrument, He made the world."[5]

And again:

"The Logos is older than created things, on whom taking hold as on a helm the pilot of the universe steers all things, and when He fashioned the world He used this instrument, for the faultless subsistence of things then completed."[6]

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[1] *Quod. Det. Potiori Insid*, I. 207. [2] Num. xxii. 31.

[3] *Quod. Deus Immut.*, I. 299. [4] *In Exodum* (II. 476. Aucher).

[5] *Legis Allegor.* I. 106. [6] *De Migratione Abrahami*, I. 437.

When, however, we turn to other expressions mixed up with these utterances that seem almost to coincide with the Christian statement of the Trinity, we are painfully conscious of a great incoherence and indecision. In addition to the vague and shadowy distinctions already cited, that stop short of real personal difference, one or two testimonies may be produced that appear clearly to contradict the idea of equality. Thus:

Mixture of incoherent and indecisive utterances with more distinctly Trinitarian ones in Philo.

The idea of equality in the Trinity contradicted.

"Since it is necessary for the rational soul of men to bear the type of the Divine Word, since God the most rational nature is superior to the first Word, He who is superior to the Word, holds a place in a better and singular kind (*species*)." [1]

And again, still more expressly, speaking of Abraham seeing the place afar off,[2] and allegorizing "the place" as the Logos, he says:

Abraham seeing the place afar off allegorized.

"But there is an ambiguity of two different things, of which the one is the Divine Logos, the other the God who is before the Logos. He who is guided by wisdom comes to the former place, finding as the head and end of good pleasure the Divine Logos, in whom being, he has not yet come to the God who really is, but sees Him afar off; or rather is not able to see Him afar off; but that God is far from every creature, this only he sees: and that the conception of Him has been lodged very far from every human mind. Not even then allegorizing the place, has he laid hold of the Cause; but the meaning is this, he came to the place, and looking up with his eyes, he saw the 'very place' to which he had come, afar off from the unnameable, unspeakable, and, by every idea, incomprehensible God." [3]

It is impossible, I think, to conceive anything

[1] *In Genesin* (II. 148. Aucher) [2] Gen. xxii. 14.

[3] *De Somniis*, I. 631.

less in harmony with the great Christian truth embodied in John i. 18:

> "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him."

The Father greater than the Son.

Christian theology, no doubt, in constructing its doctrine of the Trinity, has had to reckon with those texts of Scripture which speak of the Father as greater than the Son. But it has here had a doctrine of Incarnation as a medium of reconcilement, for which Philo had no room; and the very strongest of the utterances of any adherent of any of the creeds which allow for a priority of order in the Father in relation to the Son, preserve at the same time an equality of the Son to the Father, a necessary existence, and a capacity of fully revealing and communicating the Godhead, of which in Philo there is here the unhappy denial. His doctrine is at best a kind of wavering between a vague Sabellianism on the one hand, and a type of Arianism on the other, with a glimpse here and there of the Christian position, because inherited from the Old Testament. It may be a dim groping and longing which Christianity came to fulfil. But it could not be out of such materials that the grand, coherent, imperishable doctrine of the Trinity, built up not by human subtlety, but by sober induction out of the consenting texts of Scripture, could be formed.

The doctrine of the Incarnation, which has no place in Philo, reconciles the apparently conflicting statements of Scripture.

The wavering character of Philo's doctrine.

(2.) It now remains, *secondly*, to show, *in how scanty a relation to redemption the Logos doctrine of Philo is set forth.* Of the sixty and more passages in which that doctrine is touched upon, there are not more than ten that can be said to bear upon the doctrine of men's recovery to God as sinners. In the New Testament we know it is entirely different; and how, whatever is said of the Logos as the Creator and Upholder of the universe, as the angel or interpreter of Divine counsels, and even as the image of God, is made to bear predominantly on Incarnation and Redemption. But here also, as everywhere, there is a better element in Philo, an element of truth that in its struggle to advance further is even pathetic. Thus there is a remarkable passage in which the Logos is spoken of as a convincer of sin, and thus as a healer of it:

Few of the passages on the Logos in Philo have any relation to redemption.

In the New Testament everything said of the Logos bears on Incarnation and Redemption.

Element of truth in Philo.

The Logos spoken of as a convincer of sin and a healer of it.

"Let us, therefore, who are convinced of our own offences, entreat God rather to correct us than to leave us alone. For leaving us alone, He will make us the servants, not of His merciful self, but of the unmerciful creation; whereas correcting us, mildly and gently, as a gracious Being, He will redress our sins, having sent forth His wise-making Reprover, His own Logos into the soul, by whom overawing and rebuking it for its excesses, He will heal it."[1]

As the work here ascribed to the Logos touches in a remarkable way that of the Holy Spirit in John xvi. 8, so it may be stated that the Divine Spirit (though without mention there of the

[1] *Quod Det. Potiori Insid*, I. 219.

The Divine Spirit said to have been made to lodge in Abraham.

Logos) is said to have been made to lodge in Abraham—

"the Divine Spirit, which breathed from above dwelt in his soul, surrounding the body with singular beauty, and giving persuasion to the words."[1]

Official mediation inculcated repeatedly in Philo

Similar to these passages there is a general idea of what may be called, "official mediation" repeatedly inculcated. The following comes perhaps nearest to Christianity:

"The Father who begat the universe gave to the archangel and eldest Logos the choice gift, that standing as on a boundary he should separate the thing made from the Maker. He is the intercessor for the mortal that is always decaying with the incorruptible, and the ambassador for the ruler with the subject, and He rejoices in the gift, and exalts it, speaking thus, 'And I stand between the Lord and you' (Num. xvi. 48, where Philo's reading is peculiar), being neither unbegotten as God, nor begotten as we, but the middle of extremes, acting as a hostage with both, on the side of the Father of men, a pledge not at any time to wipe out and remove the whole race, thus leaving no world at all; and on the part of the offspring, a ground for the good hope of the merciful God never neglecting His own creature."[2]

The Incarnation approached, but shrunk back from, by Philo

This doctrine of mediation brings Philo near to Incarnation, but he shrinks back; for in a parallel passage, where the Logos is not mentioned, but he is speaking of the High Priest, to whom elsewhere the Logos is compared, he says,

His view of the High Priest to whom the Logos is compared by him.

"He comprises the whole race of men, or rather, to speak the truth, He is a certain nature, bordering on God, less than He, and better than men, for when the High Priest enters into the holiest, man shall not be there (Lev. xvi. 17). If he is not man, what is he then? Is he God? I should not say so (for the

[1] *De Nobilitate*, II. 443 [2] *Quis Rerum Div. Heres*, I. 502.

inheritance of this name the chief Prophet Moses received when being in Egypt, he was called a God unto Pharaoh (Ex. vii. 1). Neither is he man; but one who touches both extremes, the foot and the head."[1]

Thus it would seem to be neither a real divinity, nor a real humanity that belongs to the archetypal High Priest, nor through him to the Logos; and the resemblance of this mediatorship to the Christian is destroyed.

The archetypal High Priest neither a real divinity nor a real humanity; hence the resemblance to the Christian mediatorship destroyed.

It is affecting to see how Philo, without any contact with the distinctively Christian view of Incarnation and Sacrifice as the means of procuring spiritual benefits, or what are called in Christian language, "benefits of redemption," still connects these or some of them with the Logos. Thus the Logos resembles Abraham interceding for Sodom.[2] Thus also He is the anti-type of the cities of refuge:

Some of the "benefits of redemption" connected with the Logos by Philo.

"Surely the oldest, and strongest, and best metropolis (I cannot say city merely) is the Divine Logos, to whom first it is of most advantage to flee . . . He exhorts him, therefore, who is able to run quickly, to make with breathless haste for the Supreme Divine Logos, who is the fountain of wisdom, that having drawn from its tide he may instead of death find as a prize, everlasting life."[3]

It is only necessary to recall how in a formerly quoted passage, the High Priest (without any explanation of the nature of sacrifice) in sacrificing to the Father, made use "as a Paraclete of His Son

[1] *De Somniis*, I. 683–4.

[2] *De Cong. Erud. Grat.* I. 535. [3] *De Profugis*, I. 560.

Conformity to the Logos held forth as the highest gift of God.

most perfect in virtue, for the amnesty of sins, and the supply of most liberal blessings." And in one striking passage more, conformity to the Logos himself is held forth, as the highest gift of God.

"They shall obtain acceptance from the Saviour and merciful God, who has held out to the human race the best and greatest gift, affinity to His own Logos, from whom as from an archetype the human mind is derived." [1]

To sum up all in perhaps his most fervent and passionate utterance, like what might have been the language of St. Bernard, or any Christian mystic, he speaks of the Logos as,

"the cup-bearer and symposiarch of God, not differing from drink, but himself unmixed, the brightness, the sweetness, the effusion, the desire, the ambrosial medicine (for we must use poetic words) of joy and gladness." [2]

The influence of the doctrine of the Logos in the Book of Proverbs on Philo's mind and heart

Language like this may be sufficiently accounted for by the strong hold which the doctrine of the Logos in the Book of Proverbs, as the Fountain of all life and benediction, had taken upon the mind and heart of Philo; and while we cannot forgive, we blame less, his mistake as to the sacrificial system, and his silence as to great oracles like the 53rd of Isaiah.[3] But how any writer or

[1] *De Exsecrationibus*, II. 436. [2] *De Somniis*, I. 691.

[3] The writer has made no use of the passage, given in Aucher's translations from the Armenian (*In Exodum* Vol. II. 545), because this may be regarded, though Aucher has not said so, as in part at least, a Christian gloss. The gloss is here printed in Italics. "Verbum est sempiternum sempiterni Dei, caput universorum, sub quo pedum instar aut reliquorum quoque membrorum, subjectum jacet universus mundus, supra quem

writers could develop these hints into distinctive Christianity; how they could seize on the incarnation, here so entirely neglected, and make it the key-stone of an arch, which otherwise has none; how they could pass from Philo's Logos, to Jesus Christ, and Him crucified; how they could for his bright but colourless fountain bring in a fountain filled with blood, and make this alike the hope of earth, and the joy and song of heaven; and how, once more, out of a scheme where the Son and Holy Ghost are confounded, they should build up a solid and effectual Trinity, where the Spirit is the final Paraclete and the living pulse of a new and world-wide society; this the theorists of Philonian development have failed to make even plausible, far less probable. And it will be found much harder to explain Philo himself as a struggle

The hints of Philo could never have been developed into distinctive Christianity.

The Philonian theorists have never made the development probable or even plausible.

transiens constanter stat. *Non quidem eo quod Christus dominus est, supra mundum transiens sedet—sedes enim ejus juxta suum patrem est deum—sed quia* necessarium est mundo ad perfectam plenitudinem pro cura habenda exactissimæ dispensationis, atque pro propria pietate omnis generis ipsius divini verbi; sicut et animantia opus habent capite, sine quo vivere non possunt." ("The eternal word of the eternal God is the head of the universe, under which, like feet or other members, the whole world lies subjected, and above which, in his passing to and fro, he constantly stands. *Not indeed because Christ is Lord, does he passing over the world sit, for his seat is beside God his Father, but because* this is necessary to the world in order to its perfect fulness in securing its most exact administration, and from due piety of every kind towards the Divine Word himself; as even the animals have need of a head, without which they cannot live.")

of opposites, than out of any residual force of the right kind in him to give an origin to Christianity.

The writings of Philo throw no light on the prominence of suffering, weakness, and death, in the Gospels.

Let it be added, that as by the testimony of Strauss and others, the great difficulty now is to account for the prominence of suffering, weakness, and death in the biographies of Jesus in the New Testament, the writings of Philo are the last quarter to which the authors of these incomparable narratives could have fled for any light or help in the construction of them or their adaptation to Jewish pre-possessions, since his writings never raise the question of how the Divine can empty itself or pass through obscuration to more visible glory.

In the light of these internal difficulties the outward hindrances to any probable contact at any early enough date of Philo and his ideas, with founders and moulders of Christianity, may be passed over. Nor is it necessary to urge the objection that if the Logos doctrine of Philo had had a determining effect on Christianity, it is not easy to see how on ordinary laws of diffusion, it should not have influenced more, and coloured more, the entire New Testament. This tract does not exclude a tolerably early knowledge to studious men of Philo's special theory. It only denies that it could possibly—beyond what was in it of elsewhere accessible Old Testament truth—have created or controlled a wide-spread popular movement like Christianity.

Philo's theory could never have created or controlled a movement like Christianity.

We thus seem to leave each of the most plausible theories of the human origin of Christianity behind us—a visible failure; and the sense of insufficiency is increased by the fact that no one failure at any point relieves the rest, or holds out the hope that under some happier auspices the evolution theory will achieve more, and fill up the gap that now lies between its premises and its conclusions. No one can say with any truth that progress has been made in this direction, that regions once assigned to special creation have been recovered to the realm of law, and that the towering grandeur and singularity of this one religion want only a few missing links to bind it on —humbled and captive—to the other religions and moralities of the world. None of these systems can in turn set up a claim to supernatural birth. The old classic Paganism does not thus resist the attempt to carry it up by nature-worship and apotheosis from some lower type, though even here the Christian must feel how much better it is explained as the degeneracy of an older revelation. Hinduism can be resolved into a great pantheistic development, half religion, half philosophy, with a multitude of polytheistic outgrowths, varying from epoch to epoch, and as a Christian believes, wrecks and survivals of the primeval monotheism. Buddhism too, admits of solution, as a reaction, on the same idealistic ground, from the pantheism of

The evolutionary theory of the origin of Christianity a visible failure.

The grandeur and singularity of Christianity unimpaired.

No other system can claim a supernatural birth.

Hinduism can be resolved into a great pantheistic development.

Buddhism admits of solution as a reaction from India's pantheism.

India into a virtual Atheism, with many of the inconsistencies of a religion, as shown in its alliance with polytheism, and, as in Confucianism and ancient Stoicism, with a large development on the human side of ethical independence and elevation.

Zoroastrianism does not transcend the efforts of human reason.

The Zoroastrian belief will hardly be supposed to transcend the efforts of human reason, founded as it is upon an apparent dualism, which, however, reason cannot long endure, and which has more and more limited the scope of this now decayed system.

Mohammedanism an agglomerate of Arabian tradition, Judaism and Christianity.

When we turn to Mohammedanism, the natural evolutionist and the Christian will alike deny it anything of a proper Divine birth, since though fused in the soul of a great personality, who was able to convey his own enthusiasm to others, and to stamp it by means all too human upon the face of the world, it is a manifest conglomerate of Arabian tradition, Judaism and Christianity, the first lifted up to meet the two last in a reduced and abated shape, and without even the shadow of new ideas beyond them, such as its founder claimed in his character of the Paraclete whom Christ had promised; so that those who expect evolution to run in the line of chronology are here corrected, and may as soon make Mormonism, as it also professes to be, the last development both of the Old and New Testament.

When from the obviously inferior level of these

religions, and also from their historical failure, we return to the claims of Christianity, including Judaism, to be in the proper sense Divine, as originating and carrying through a grand scheme of redemption, culminating in the Incarnation and Atonement of the eternal Word of God, we find that we have recovered the clue to a true development of which that of mere rationalized philosophy or empty speculative theology is but a distorted image. We have gone back to the cradle of a once happy race, before redemption was needed, and can account for the traditions of a golden age. Out of these memories and the traces of early revelation, we can account for the remnants of truth both as bearing upon religion in general, and upon sacrificial and other monuments of a system of grace, that linger amidst the darkness of a fall. We trace the beginnings of prophecy, helped by the light of primitive sacrifice. The call of Abraham, like the record of the Deluge, discriminates a new start of covenant faith from the legends of idolatry. The Mosaic legislation follows, with its Decalogue, its growing Messianic hope, its grand ritual of propitiation, suited to the childhood of the world, but impossible to have grown up out of a mere nature-worship with its feasts and seasons. Theocracy consolidates the religion of a separate people; and prophecy, its necessary organ, with priesthood, at once guards the present by its moral office, and

Christianity gives the clue to the true development of which rationalised philosophy or empty speculative theology is a distorted image.

The memories of early revelation account for the remnants of truth that linger amid the darkness of a fall.

The beginnings of prophecy.

The call of Abraham.

The Mosaic legislation and Messianic hope.

unveils the future, with a glow of hope from direct inspiration which disowns the parallel with heathen oracles. This system of preparation with its successive advances carries the Old Testament onward to its close; and all the while the defeats and captivities of the people are the victories of their religion and the means of its purification and diffusion. Everything is in harmony with the laws of a Divine revelation, where God necessarily must plan and order, and where, though the laws of history are still observed, the human element cannot be supreme. Hence there is enough of development to make man free and history possible, and enough of revelation and providence to save grace from failure, and history from barrenness. Thus the Jewish dispensation has its great vindication; and even the Gentile world, with the gropings of its superstition and the struggles of its philosophy, does not lie beyond the pale of this preparation for Christ. Plato comes in, but not as an originator of Christianity, or day-star compelling its dawn, but rather as an infant crying for it in the dark; and Philo, still more visibly, because in its own twilight, though with face half-averted from its rising beam. We have seen the failure of Strauss to construct out of its mistaken prophecies, the reality; but even its true prophecies could not have fulfilled themselves, partly from their own obscurity, and still more from their

The Old Testament carried on to its close.

God plans, yet the laws of history are observed.

The vindication of the Jewish dispensation.

The Gentile world not beyond the pale of preparation for Christ.

The fulfilment of prophecy dependent on the fulness of time.

dependence on "the fulness of the time." When Christ came, as was proper to One who was the First and Last, He "finished the work and cut it short in righteousness;" and thus was condensed into so brief a life and ministry (a sign among others of its higher descent), a fulness of work, suffering, teaching and influence, which accomplished all the past and heralded all the future. The same law of development still has its place; yet not beyond Christ, but only to the manifestation of what is in Him; and this we see in the completion of the New Testament Canon, in the foundation and growth of the early Church, and in the perpetual expansion of Christianity. The presence of Christ by His Spirit in the Church necessitates progress, though amidst apparent decay, as the earth is being replenished and subdued, even amidst the sterner seasons; and there is in Christianity what no other religion has ever approached, a power of renovation, of reform in doctrine, of renewal in life, and of grand outbursts in social, political and world-wide influence, which connect it not with ordinary development, but with Divine history. Some faint shadow of this is found in human discovery, in the march of civilisation and in the revival of liberty, where the dropped thread of ages is taken up and the extinguished torch glows with its ancient fires. But this too, after all, is part of a plan, of which the

Christ finished the work.

The law of development in the completion of the New Testament Canon.

The presence of Christ in the Church necessitates progress.

The power of renovation in Christianity

The kingdom of Christ the abiding centre of a world-renewing plan.

kingdom of Christ is the one abiding and unshaken centre, which slowly and to us mysteriously is renewing all things with its own youth, and holding out to all institutions, as to all souls that are not incurably hostile to it, the promise of its own universal victory. It would be an imperfect recommendation of Christianity if we could only prove it Divine in its origin, and not also in its mighty fruits and possibilities as the very hope of the world. And let it be added, that it would also be an inadequate pleading for it which overlooked the urgency of claims and serious responsibilities which its underivable and sole greatness brings with it, and from the height of which its Divine Author could with such authority say:

Christianity not only Divine in its origin but in its fruits and possibilities as the hope of the world.

The claims and responsibilities that it brings with it.

"All things are delivered unto Me of My Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him."

THE DAY OF REST

IN RELATION TO

THE WORLD THAT NOW IS

AND

THAT WHICH IS TO COME

BY

SIR J. WILLIAM DAWSON, C.M.G., LL.D., F.R.S.

Argument of the Tract.

After showing that the creative days of Genesis are days of God, Divine periods or ages, the Tract goes on to show the true nature of the Sabbath Law of the Old Testament, as a commemoration of God's finished work of Creation and entrance into His Sabbatism, of the loss of this Sabbatism by man at the Fall, and of the promise of its restoration by a Redeemer. In this way it is proposed to explain the position of the Sabbath law in the Decalogue, the importance attached to it in the Old Testament, and its necessary change into the Lord's Day as the memorial of the finished work of Redemption which fulfils the promise of the Old Testament Sabbath. Certain practical deductions from these considerations, bearing on the obligation and use of the Lord's Day, are stated in the concluding portion.

THE DAY OF REST

IN

RELATION TO THE WORLD THAT NOW IS,

AND THAT WHICH IS TO COME.

THERE are wonderful links of connection between the ways of God in creation, in providence, and in grace, which are always deserving of study, more especially when they are pointed out by the Word of God itself. This is eminently the case with the Sabbath law. Placed in the middle of the Ten Commandments, between the precepts that relate to God and those that relate to man, it must have a moral and spiritual significance. Providing for a weekly day of rest from labour for all men, good and evil, and even for the animals under their control, it should have a direct relation to our external well-being. Enforced by a reason carrying our minds back to the original creation of the world, it should be connected in some way with the great work of constructing the earth for man, and with his own earliest relations with his Creator. I desire in this Tract to direct attention more par-

Links of connection between creation, providence, and grace.

The place of the Sabbath law.

The provision it makes.

The reason of it.

ticularly to this last aspect of the Sabbath law, and to its bearing on the others.

The days of creation.

At first sight it seems a very simple explanation of the reason annexed to the commandment, that God made the world and things therein in six natural days, and rested on the seventh, and that He enjoins on us the following of His example. But the more we think of this the more unsatisfactory it becomes. The parallel does not hold good. If it pleased God to make the world in six of our ordinary days and to rest on the seventh, this was a work done once for all, and bears no analogy to our recurring weeks of toil and days of rest. Nor is there any apparent need for our thus seeming to imitate God's procedure, if that were the only reason. Still less does one see any inherent moral obligation resting on us to give up one-seventh of our time on account of such imitation. This incongruity is only increased by the evident intention of the Lawgiver to represent the Sabbath not as a new institution but as a primitive practice, to be remembered and continued. He says "remember" the Sabbath day, as if speaking of an old institution. There is also in the six days of labour an implied reference to the curse incurred by man at the fall, and in so far as the seventh day is concerned, a partial relaxation of this eating of bread with the sweat of the brow.

No inherent moral obligation to give up one-seventh part of our time.

The implied references of the fourth commandment.

It has long appeared to the writer that the

proper significance of this command is reached only when we bear in mind that the creative days of the first chapter of Genesis are really days of God, Divine periods—olamim, or ages, as they are elsewhere called [1]—or, which amounts to the same thing, that they are intended to represent or to indicate such ages of God's working. This conclusion I desire to rest not so much on the discoveries of modern science, though these fully vindicate it, as on the usage and statements of the Bible writers and their contemporaries, and of the early Christian Church. The writer of the introduction to Genesis sees no incongruity in those early days which passed before natural days were instituted; "ineffable days" as Augustine well calls them. He does not represent the seventh day as having an evening and morning like the others, nor does he hint that God resumed His work on the eighth day. In chapter second he represents the world as produced in one day, evidently using the word in an indefinite sense. Further, in the succeeding literature of the Old Testament, while we have no actual statement that the creative days were natural days, or that the world was made in a short period, we find the term olam or age applied to God's periods of working, and in the 104th Psalm, which is a poetical narrative of creation, the idea conveyed is that of lapse of time, without

The days of creation Divine periods or ages.

The seventh day in Genesis has no evening and morning.

The word day indefinitely used in the second chapter of Genesis.

The term "olam" in the later books of the Old Testament.

[1] Psalm xc.

The teaching of our Lord and the Apostles.

division into days. We shall find in the sequel that the same idea is contained in the teaching of our Lord, and of the Apostolic Epistles, and was familiar to the primitive Church. That we may fully understand the bearing of these facts on the Sabbath question, it will be necessary for us to consider in some detail a doctrine common to the teaching of the Word of God, and of natural and physical science, and which we may designate as the doctrine of "*time-worlds*," or of worlds existing in ages of time as distinguished from "*space-worlds*," or worlds considered merely as of certain dimensions, and existing in space.

The doctrine of "*time-worlds*" common to revelation and science.

When we speak of the world or the universe, the ordinary hearer has perhaps before his mind merely the idea of bodies occurring in space; and the vast discoveries of modern times as to the distances and magnitudes of the heavenly bodies have contributed to fill the minds of men with conceptions of the immensity of space, perhaps to the exclusion of another direction of thought equally important. Worlds must, however, exist in time as well as in space. This idea is very familiar to the mind of the geologist, who traces the long history of the earth through successive periods, and also knows that each succeeding age has seen it different from its condition on those which preceded it. This consideration is also before the mind of the physical astronomer, who

Worlds exist in time as well as in space.

thinks of suns and planets as passing through different successive conditions, and as actually presenting different stages in the present.

The question as to whether other worlds may be inhabited.

This point is curiously illustrated by a controversy which raged some time ago as to whether the planets and other heavenly bodies may be inhabited worlds, and especially whether they may be inhabited by rational beings.

The world before man appeared.

If we look at this question with reference to our own world, we shall find that each successive stage of its existence whether as a vaporous mass, as a heated molten globe, as the abode of merely inferior animals, has been of vast duration as compared with the time in which it has been inhabited by man. Farther, it is gradually approaching the condition in which it will no longer be habitable; and unless some renovating process shall be applied to it, this desolate condition may be of indefinite duration. Thus, if we imagine ourselves to be beings not resident on the earth, and that we could visit it only at one period of its history, the chances would be vastly against our seeing it at that precise stage of its existence in which it is fitted for the residence of rational beings. On the other hand, if we were capable of taking in its whole duration, we would comprehend that it has its particular stage for being the abode of intelligence, and that it has a definite and intelligible history as a world in time,

The approaching condition of the world.

Its history parallel to that of other worlds.

which may be more or less parallel to that of all other worlds.

The moon.

This truth also appears if we consider other planetary bodies. The moon may have been inhabited at a time when our earth was luminous and incandescent, but it has passed into a state of senility and desolation.

Mars.

The planet Mars, which seems physically not unlike the earth, may be in a condition similar to that of our world in the older geological periods.

Jupiter and Saturn.

Jupiter and Saturn are probably still intensely heated and encompassed with vaporous "deeps," and may perhaps aid in supporting life on their satellites, while untold ages must elapse before those magnificent orbs can arrive at a stage suitable for maintaining life like that on the earth. Long after all these ages have passed, and when all the planets have grown old and lifeless, the sun itself, now a fiery mass, may arrive at a condition suited for living and rational beings.

All worlds not capable of supporting life.

Thus the physical conditions of our planetary system teach that if we suppose all worlds capable of supporting life, all are not so at one time, and that as ages pass, each may successively take up this *rôle*, of which in greater or less degree all may at some time or other be capable. So when we ascend to the starry orbs, those suns may have attendant worlds, some in one stage, some in another. There may also be stars and nebulæ

still scarcely formed, and others which have passed far beyond the present state of our sun and its planets. Thus the universe is a vastly varied and progressive scene. At no one time can all worlds be seats of such life as we know; but of the countless suns and worlds that exist, thousands or millions may at any one time be in this state, while thousands of times as many may be gradually arriving at it or passing from it. Such are the thoughts which necessarily pass through our minds when we consider the existence of worlds in time.

The universe a varied and progressive scene.

Now these ideas, though rendered more definite by modern discoveries, are very old, and they impressed themselves on the mind of antiquity before men could measure the vastness of the universe in space. They are also present in Divine revelation, and it is necessary to have them before our minds if we would enter into the thoughts of the writers of the Old and New Testaments when they treat of time and eternity. The several stages of the earth in its progress from chaos, the prophetic pictures of its changes in the future, as stated in the Bible, alike embody the idea of time-worlds, or ages of God's working. It is in this aspect that the universe is compared to a vesture of God, which He can change as a garment, while He Himself remains ever the same.[1] It is in contrast to the eternity of truth that the heavens

These ideas ancient.

They are present in Divine revelation.

The past and future stages of the earth according to the Bible embody the idea of time-worlds.

[1] Psalm cii. 26.

and earth are said to be passing away, but the words of the Redeemer shall never pass away.[1] It is with the same reference that we are told that "the things which are seen are temporal, the things which are unseen are eternal."[2]

The Hebrew and Greek words *olam* and *aion* bring before us the idea of time-worlds.

The use made of the Hebrew word *olam* and the Greek *aiōn* in the sense of age, or even of eternity, brings before us still more clearly this Biblical idea of time-worlds. In that sublime "prayer of Moses the man of God" which we have in the 90th Psalm, God, who is the "dwelling-place of man in generation to generation," who existed before the mountains were brought forth, with whom a thousand years are "as a watch in the night," is said to be from "olam to olam," from "everlasting to everlasting," as the English version has it,[3] but more properly from age to age of those long cosmic ages in which He creates and furnishes successive worlds. So when God is said to be the "High and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity,"[4] it is not abstract eternity, but these successive olams, or time-worlds, which are His habitation. In the Old Testament, God as revealed to us in His works, dwells in the grand succession of worlds in time, thus continuously and variously manifesting His power, a much more living and attractive view of divinity than the mere abstract affirmation of eternity.

God dwells in the succession of worlds in time.

[1] Matt. xxiv. 25. [2] 2 Cor. iv. 18.

[3] This is retained in the Revised Version, which I think unfortunate. [4] Isaiah lvii. 15.

The same thought is taken up and amplified in the New Testament. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who treats very specially of the relations of the Old Testament to the New, speaks of Christ as God's Son, "whom He hath appointed Heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds,"[1] more literally "constituted the aiōns or ages." He does not refer, as one might conceive from the English translation, to different worlds in space, but to the successive ages of this world, in which it was being gradually prepared and fitted up for man. So Paul, in his doxology at the end of the third chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, ascribes to the Redeemer glory in "all generations of the ages or aiōns;"[2] and in the ninth verse of the same chapter he speaks of the gospel as "the mystery which from all ages hath been hid in God who created all things." So, also, in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, we are told that by faith we understand that "the ages were constituted by the Word of God." Another fine illustration of this idea is in Paul's familiar and business-like letter to Titus, where he says that he lives "in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began, but hath in due time manifested His word."[3] The expression "the world began" here represents the

The same thought in the New Testament,

Christ constituting the ages.

St. Paul ascribes glory to Christ in all generations of the ages.

The ages constituted by the Word of God.

[1] Heb. i. 2, R.V. margin.
[2] R.V. margin. [3] Titus i. 2.

The life of the ages.

"ages of time," and the "eternal life" is the "life of the ages." Thus what the Apostle hopes for is life through the unlimited ages of God's working, and this life has been promised, before the beginning of the time-worlds of creation.

The relation of the whole duration of God's working to us.

So the whole past, present, and future of God's working has its relation to us, and is included under this remarkable idea of ages or time-worlds, and is appropriated by faith and hope as the possession of God's people. God, who cannot lie, has pledged Himself to us from the beginning of those long ages in which He founded the earth; He has promised us His favour in all the course of His subsequent work; He has sealed this promise in the mission of His Son, that same glorious Being through whom He arranged all those vast ages of creation and providence; and in the strength of this promise we can look forward by faith to an endless life with Him in all the future ages of His boundless working.

The light thrown on the day of rest by the creative days of geology.

The long creative days of geology may thus be shown to throw a most important light on the institution of the weekly Sabbath and its continuance as the Lord's day. If it is true that the seventh or Sabbath Day of creation still continues, and was intended to be a day of rest for the Creator and for man made in His likeness, we find in this a substantial reason for the place of the Sabbath in the Decalogue. Further, by means of our Lord's

declaration in reply to the Pharisees, "My Father worketh even until now, and I work," though God has finished His work of creation and now only works in providence and redemption, as well as by the argument in the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, we can carry this idea forward into the Christian dispensation. But these facts are so important to the right understanding of our subject, that it seems necessary to examine them in some detail, and in a humble and earnest spirit, ready to receive new light and to relinquish old prepossessions, if found to be contrary to the testimony of Scripture.

The idea of the Sabbath as a day of rest for the Creator and man carried further.

At first sight, as already hinted, the place of the fourth commandment in the Decalogue, and the vast importance attached to this law by the Hebrew writers, strike us as strange and anomalous. The Sabbath stands as the sole example of a ritual observance, in those "ten words," which otherwise mark the most general moral relations of man to God and to his fellow-men. Farther, the reason given seems trivial. If it is meant that God worked on six natural days, and rested on the seventh, the question arises, what is He doing on the subsequent days? Does He keep up this alternation of six days' work and one day's rest; and if not, how is this an example to us? If it is argued that the whole reason of God's six days' work and the seventh day's rest was to give an

The place of the Sabbath law at first sight strange and anomalous.

example, this conveys the absurdity of doing what is infinitely great for an end comparatively insignificant, and which might have been attained by a command without any reason assigned. But let us now suppose that when God rested on the seventh day He entered into an æon of vast duration, intended to be distinguished by the happy Sabbatism of man in an Edenic world, and in which every day would have been a Sabbath; or if there was a weekly Sabbath, it would have been but a memorial of a work leading to a perpetual Sabbath then enjoyed. Let us farther suppose that at the fall of man the Sabbath Day was instituted, or obtained a new significance as a memorial of an Edenic Sabbatism lost, and also as a memorial of God's promise, that through a Redeemer it would be restored. Then the Sabbath becomes the central point of all religion, the standing and perpetual memorial of an Eden lost, and of a paradise to be restored by the coming Seed of the woman, as well as a time to prepare ourselves for this future life. The commandment, "Remember the Sabbath Day," called upon the Israelite to remember the fall of man, to remember the promise of a Saviour, to look forward to a future Sabbatism in the reign of the Redeemer. It is thus the Gospel in the Decalogue, giving vitality to the whole, and is most appropriately placed, and with a more full explanation than any

The supposition that justifies it.

How the Sabbath becomes the central point of all religion.

The Sabbath the Gospel in the Decalogue.

other command, between the laws that relate to God and the laws that relate to man.

The argument in the Epistle to the Hebrews (ch. iv.) may help us to understand this; and it is the more valuable that it is not an argument about the Sabbath, but introduces it incidentally, and that it seems to take for granted the belief in a long or olamic Sabbath on the part of those to whom it is addressed. It may be freely rendered as follows:

The argument in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

A free rendering of it.

"For God hath spoken in a certain place (Gen. ii. 2) of the seventh day in this wise: 'And God did rest on the seventh day from all His works;' and in this place again: 'They shall not enter into My rest' (Psa. xcv. 11). Seeing, therefore, it still remaineth that some enter therein, and they to whom it (God's Sabbatism) was first proclaimed, entered not in because of disobedience (in the Fall, and afterward in the sin of the Israelites in the desert), again He fixes a certain day, saying in David's writings, (long after the time of Joshua,) 'To-day, if ye hear His voice, harden not your hearts.' (Psa. xcv. 8.) For if Joshua had given them rest in Canaan, He would not afterward have spoken of another day. There is therefore yet reserved a keeping of a Sabbath for the people of God. For He that is entered into His rest (that is, Jesus Christ, who has finished His work and entered into His rest in heaven), He Himself also rested from His own works, as God did from His own. Let us therefore earnestly strive to enter into that rest."

The various Sabbatisms indefinite periods mutually related.

It is evident that in this passage God's Sabbatism, the rest intended for man in Eden, and for Israel in Canaan, Christ's rest in heaven after finishing His work, the rest which may now be enjoyed by Christians, and the final heavenly rest of Christ's people, are all indefinite periods mutually related, and are all Sabbatisms of which the weekly Sabbath is a continuous reminder and token.

Another reason for the fourth commandment.

In the repetition of the decalogue, in the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy, another reason is annexed to the fourth commandment:

"Remember that thou wast a slave in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God brought thee out thence."

Perfect harmony between the reasons.

This is in perfect harmony with the reason in Exodus, and merely a further development of it. The first reason refers to the rest of the Creator, the second to the rest from Egyptian bondage and the promised rest of Canaan. Both are referred to by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who clearly sees the connection between them.

The supposition that they are contradictory hypercritical.

The mistake of supposing them to be mutually contradictory is peculiar to a certain stage of modern hypercriticism.

If this is a correct view of the relation of the Jewish Sabbath to the Creation and the Fall, it enables us to appreciate the force of the injunction to "remember" the Sabbath day to keep it holy, for in this case the Sabbath must have been no new institution, but one of primitive obligation, and dating from the fall of man at the latest. It also enables us to understand the prevalence of Sabbatical ideas among nations independent of Hebrew influence, and more especially among the Chaldeans, from whom Abraham came. With them, as recent investigations have shown, the seventh day had a certain sacredness attached to it from very early times.[1]

The primitive obligation of the Sabbath.

The sacredness of the Sabbath among the Chaldeans and other nations outside of Hebrew influence.

[1] Sayce, *Fresh Light from the Ancient Monuments.*

Bible evidence.

But what evidence does the Bible itself offer as to this? We have no Sabbath law till the time of the Exodus, and there is scarcely any reference previously to other religious ordinances than those of sacrifice and circumcision. Still there are indications of a Sabbath. We need not perhaps attach much importance to the expression "in process of time," or more literally, "at the end of days,"[1] applied to the time when Cain and Abel offered their sacrifices, as we do not certainly know whether a weekly, monthly, or yearly interval is intended. We find, however, Noah reckoning by weeks in sending out birds from the ark.[2] Laban and Jacob also reckoned by weeks.[3] In Joseph's time also, the Hebrews reckoned by sevens in the division of time.[4] So in the early part of the Exodus before the giving of the law, the Sabbath is incidentally mentioned, in connection with the gift of the manna, and in terms which show that it was already known as "a solemn rest, a holy Sabbath unto the Lord."[5] It is interesting, however, to observe that there seems to have been no pre-intimation of the day, except the gathering of a double quantity of manna on the sixth day, and that the rulers reported the fact to Moses, as if asking instruction. This would seem to imply either that the day of rest had fallen into disuse in Egypt.

Early indications of a Sabbath.

The Sabbath and manna.

Moses' interpretation of the injunction with reference to the gathering of a double portion of manna on the sixth day.

[1] Genesis iv. 3. [2] *Ibid.* viii. 12. [3] *Ibid.* xxix. 27.
[4] *Ibid.* l. 3, 12. [5] Exod. xvi. 23, R.V.

or that its occurrence had not at first seemed to the people likely to be recognised as interfering with the gathering of necessary food; but Moses at once interprets the fact as God's recognition of His own day.

The early notices of the Sabbath few and casual; but sufficient when taken in connection with other passages.

These early notices of the Sabbath are, it is true, few and casual, and remind us of the informal way in which the Lord's Day is introduced in the New Testament. But when taken in connection with the statement as to God's hallowing the day at the close of His creative work, and with the word "remember" in the commandment, they are sufficient to show the Patriarchal origin of the rest of the seventh day, and to carry it back to the gate of Eden. We may further note here that the Israelites when enslaved in Egypt must have been, to a great extent at least, deprived of the Sabbath rest. The Egyptians, even if they had themselves some notion of a Sabbatism, whether on the tenth or the seventh day, were not likely to have consulted the scruples or the comfort of their foreign slaves in such matters, any more than modern pleasure-seekers are disposed to regard those of railway employés or museum curators. The Hebrews had thus known the bitterness of ceaseless labour, and so are reminded in Deuteronomy of those past sufferings as a reason for their holding fast to the privilege restored to them in their newly-found freedom. It would be well if those

Israel in Egypt.

The Hebrews' experience of ceaseless labour in Egypt.

modern nations which neglect the Lord's day could see it in this light, and receive it as a part of that liberty with which Christ makes His people free.

The Sabbath in the post-Mosaic stages of Jewish history till the time of Christ.

The post-Mosaic stages of Jewish history show that the ideas of the connection of the Sabbath with the primitive promise of redemption and with the liberation of the chosen people, are carried onward to the time of Christ. At some periods of Jewish history the Sabbath no doubt fell greatly into neglect, but these were times of general decadence and of lapse into idolatry, and every prophetic or priestly revival of religion exalted the obligations of the Sabbath. Isaiah laments the misuse and neglect of the day, and promises even to the eunuchs and the strangers in Palestine that if they will "keep the Sabbath, and hold fast by God's covenant" implied in it, He will give them

In the time of Isaiah.

"a memorial and a name better than of sons and of daughters . . . an everlasting name." "I will bring them to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer."[1]

It is the same prophet who intensifies its blessings, while connecting it with the patriarchs and with the covenant of God, in the grand words:—

"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath,
From doing thy pleasure on my holy day;
And shalt call the Sabbath a delight
And the holy of Jehovah honourable,
And shalt honour it, not doing thine own ways,
Nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words;

[1] Isa. lvi. 4–8.

Then shalt thou delight thyself in Jehovah,
And I will make thee ride upon the high places of the earth,
And I will feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father,
For the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it." [1]

Jeremiah's view of it.

Jeremiah connects in the strongest manner its observance, as an efficient cause, with God's blessing, and with prosperity, and regards the keeping of the Sabbath as an essential condition of national welfare.[2]

Ezekiel's view.

Ezekiel expressly calls the Sabbath a sign or pledge that God would sanctify His people.[3]

The significance of prophetic doctrine.

The profound significance of this prophetic doctrine becomes evident only when we connect the Sabbath with God's olamic rest, with man's fall and with the promise of a final and eternal Sabbatism, in the manner explained in the passage already quoted from the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The effect of prophetic statements.

There can be no doubt that these strong statements of the prophets were influential with the Jews in the captivity, and were important means of preserving them from idolatry and forgetfulness of their God, and that when they were again delivered from bondage they would return with enhanced ideas of Sabbath obligation, akin to those of their fathers at the time of the Exodus. We see this in the legislation of Nehemiah, and in a debased and ritualistic form in the Pharisaic strictness of the time of Christ.

The consistency of Bible history on the subject throughout.

Let us further note here that there is a strict consistency throughout in the Biblical history of

[1] Isa. lviii. 13, R.V. [2] Jer. xvii. 24, 25. [3] Ezek. xx. 12.

the Sabbath, from the first announcement of the rest of the Creator in the second chapter of Genesis till the advent of the promised Redeemer, and no room is left here for attributing a late origin to the Sabbath law, without throwing the whole history into confusion. The Sabbath of Exodus is meaningless without the Creative days, the Fall, and the promise of Redemption. The testimony of the Psalms and Prophets pre-supposes the Sabbath law, and its spiritual relations. The attitude of the post-exilic Jews pre-supposes and results from the law and the prophets. Among the sectaries of the time of our Lord, the Sabbath had only experienced the fate of other spiritual elements of the old dispensation which they had "made void by their traditions," substituting form for substance.

The presuppositions of the Sabbath of the Exodus and of the Psalms and Prophets.

The Sabbath in our Lord's time.

These considerations not only give a high and spiritual significance to the Sabbath and the Lord's Day, and connect them with God's great working in the universe, and with the fall and redemption of man, but they give us practical information respecting the manner of keeping the Lord's Day and its relation to Christian doctrine and practice.

The Sabbath in its various relations.

We can thus understand the attitude of Christ Himself with regard to the Sabbath. While He denounced that Pharisaical rigidity which made the day a burden rather than a privilege, and which

The attitude of Christ to the Sabbath.

directed attention to minute details of its observance rather than to its higher significance, neither His example nor His teaching took away from its sacredness or diminished its obligation, except when opposed to works of necessity or mercy, or of direct service to God. The Sabbath was made for man as—

"a means, and not an end; worth nothing unless it conduced to the end—man's welfare, man's refreshment in body, mind, and spirit."[1]

How the Lord's Day is to be kept.

Thus if we ask how the Lord's Day should be kept, we are referred at once to the examples of God the Father and of God the Son. The Creator's rest with reference to this world, is one of contemplation, and of beneficent and merciful attention to its interests. He regards His work and pronounces it good, and then enters into His rest. So the Redeemer entered into His rest when He could say, "It is finished." God in His Sabbath sustains and nourishes all His creatures, and relieves their wants. This is the force of our Lord's reply to the Pharisees: "My Father worketh even until now, and I work," and they seem so to have understood the reference to the creation and to Divine providence, that they had no rejoinder to make. God occupies His Sabbatism, lost to man by the fall, in that work of redemption by which it is to be finally restored. The rest

How God occupies His Sabbatism, and how Jesus occupies His.

[1] *Sunday*, by Plumptre, 1866.

into which Jesus entered is occupied in preparing a place for us, and in acting as our great High-Priest in the most holy place on high. In like manner our Sabbath should be a time of communion with God, and a time for acts of love and mercy to our fellow-men. There is a Divine activity which is not incompatible with, but a fulfilment of the Sabbath law, and the examples given by Christ, as that of the ox fallen into a pit, the healing of diseases, and the Temple service, all point with perfect consistency to the ultimate and higher benefit of man.

Our Sabbath should be a time for communion with God, and for acts of love and mercy to man.

This was the ground of the often-recurring conflict between the Christ, who knew what the Sabbath really means, and the Pharisees, whose tradition had turned it into a day of mere austerity and unmeaning ritualism. Surely if this was true of the Jewish Sabbath, it is true of the Lord's Day. It is to be observed in this connection that when Christ claims the Lordship of the Sabbath, He does this in the capacity of the Son of Man, "the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath," for it is essentially as Redeemer that He is the Fulfiller of the Sabbath law, and so its Lord. May we not also see in this a prescience on the part of Christ of that change in the day which would be a necessary consequence of His resurrection on the first day of the week, and which would mark the commencement of the new dispensation by a day com-

The ground of conflict between Christ and the Pharisees as to the Sabbath.

Christ as Son of Man claims the Lordship of the Sabbath.

memorative of this rather than of the work of creation.

The connection between the Old Testament Sabbath and the Lord's Day of Christians.

The right understanding of the Old Testament Sabbath aids us in comprehending the connection of the Lord's Day of Christians with the Jewish Sabbath. If the latter had a reference to a Sabbatism lost by the fall and restored by the Redeemer, the Son of Man must be "Lord of the Sabbath," in the sense of fulfilling and realizing its prophetic import. Therefore, the day on which He finished His work and entered into His rest must of necessity be that to be commemorated by Christians, until the time when the return of Christ shall inaugurate that final and eternal Sabbatism which remains to His people. Thus the Lord's Day comes to occupy the same important place formerly occupied by the Jewish Sabbath. In this as in other things, the Old Testament saints without us are not complete, for our Lord's Day is the completion of their Sabbath. It links together God's creative work and Christ's work of redemption; the Sabbatism lost in the fall and restored in the Saviour; the imperfect state of the militant Church, still having only a pledge of a rest to come, and the Church triumphant, which will enjoy this rest for ever. If the Sabbath that carried with it the mournful memory of the first sin was holy, much more that which points forward, through Christ's finished work and present rest, to a

How the Lord's Day comes to occupy the place formerly occupied by the Jewish Sabbath.

What it links together

heavenly paradise. If the obligation to remember it was to the Hebrew equal to that of the most binding moral duties, still more must the Lord's Day be a day to be remembered by the Christian, as the memorial of Christ's finished work, and of our heirship of all the divine ages, past, present, and to come. Thus we see that the moral and spiritual dignity and obligation of the Lord's Day rise far above those of the Jewish Sabbath, and we can understand how naturally the apostles and primitive Christians, almost without note of the change, and without requiring any positive enactment, transferred their allegiance from the seventh to the first day of the week.

The enhanced obligation of the Lord's Day

It may be useful to mention in this connection the strong statement in relation to the Jewish Sabbath contained in the Epistle to the Colossians (ii. 16). The Christians of Colossæ had apparently been urged by some of their teachers to keep the Jewish Sabbath as a matter of legal obligation, either along with or instead of the Lord's Day. Paul repudiates this in the words,

The statement in the Epistle to the Colossians

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a feast day, or a new moon, or a Sabbath day;"

adding as a reason,

"which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body (or Substance) is Christ's."

There can scarcely be a question that the Old Testament Sabbath is intended here, and the as-

The Old Testament Sabbath intended.

The assertion in harmony with other parts of Scripture.

sertion that it was a "shadow" of the future coming of Christ is in perfect harmony with the testimony of other parts of Scripture, and with the idea that when Christ, who is the Substance, had come, the old Sabbath, as the anticipatory shadow, must pass away. It is to be noticed, in accordance with this, that where the day observed by Christians is mentioned in the New Testament it is called simply "the first day of the week," except in that passage of the Apocalypse where for the first time we find the term, afterwards general, "the Lord's Day."[1]

The description of the day as observed by Christians.

The meaning of Christ's saying that "the Sabbath was made for man."

We learn also from this view of the day of rest the full meaning of that weighty saying of Jesus: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Man, as originally created, needed no Sabbath law, for he had entered into the perpetual rest of the Sabbatism of his Creator.

The Sabbath a spiritual privilege to fallen man.

But when he fell from this high estate the Sabbath was made for him, not as a mere legal obligation, but as a great spiritual privilege. For this reason faithful men and women in Israel of old clung to it as the earnest of the great salvation which was to restore the lost paradise for which their hearts yearned, and with reference to which their cry was, "O that I had wings like a dove, then

[1] Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2; Rev. i. 10. In the Peschito version the expression "Lord's Day" occurs in 1 Cor. xi. 20. (Etheridge's Translation, p. 272.)

would I fly away and be at rest."[1] So it is in regard to the Lord's Day. Just as we honour and trust in the Saviour, so shall we regard the day which commemorates His entering into His rest. Just as we appreciate that rest which He gives us in part here, and as our hearts long for that rest which remains in the Father's house, so shall we hold in loving remembrance the day which points to it, and which enables us to have some faint realization of it in the midst of sorrow and trouble.

As we honour the Saviour we shall regard His day.

In a lower sense the Sabbath was made for man as a relief from the heavy curse of unremitting labour, and though the world will never gain much spiritually by a merely legal observance of the Sabbath, even this is of priceless value to the working man in a moral, social, and physical point of view. It is thus not merely an arbitrary enactment, but a statement of an effect depending on an adequate cause, that the man or the nation honouring God's day of rest will itself be honoured and prospered.

The Sabbath a relief from unremitting labour.

The primitive Sabbath of Genesis and of the Moral Law has thus a definite connection with human labour and with the physical well-being of man. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," is the doom of fallen humanity—a doom too fearfully felt in the whole history of the world, and strange to say, apparently not less so in our times

The connection of the primitive Sabbath with labour

[1] Psalm lv. 6, R.V.

of mechanical invention and mastery over nature, than in ruder ages. How terribly would this doom have been aggravated had man been expelled from Eden to a life of unremitting toil. But the Sabbath stood between him and this fate, and so far as human experience has shown, was the only possible means of alleviating his life of labour. Hence Moses impresses on his nation of emancipated slaves the constant remembrance of this day, and enjoins on them the extension of its benefits to their own slaves and to strangers within their gates, even though not believers in Jehovah. Hence also the provisions of the law are extended even to domestic animals, which, though destitute of spiritual natures, have bodily organisms, which under ceaseless labour will be worn out prematurely and subjected to a living death while they survive. These lower animals have no share in the moral law directly, but it is immoral to deprive them of the little happiness of which they are capable, and to subject them to conditions inconsistent with their physical well-being. The physiological necessity for a periodical interruption of toil, whether for man or beast, is thus affirmed in the law, and it is verified by all that we have learned of the constitution of living things. It is confirmed by the experience of all thoughtful men and of all nations. A nation without a Sabbath must fall to a low ebb of civilisation and efficiency,

The Sabbath the only means of alleviating the life of labour.

The law extended even to domestic animals.

The physiological necessity for a periodical interruption of toil for man or beast affirmed.

A nation without a Sabbath must prematurely decay.

or its people must become prematurely old and worn out. It scarcely needs any special intervention of Divine justice to inflict on those who disregard the Sabbath the penalties denounced by the Hebrew prophets. Those who would take away the day of rest from the working man on any pretext, are not his true friends; and it is one of the hopeful signs of the times, that in recent discussions of this question the working men and those who might most truly be considered their representatives have shown themselves opposed to innovations, which however plausible and harmless in appearance, might be the thin edge of the wedge which would break down this great privilege. It seems to be a result of physiological and social laws, as well as of moral laws, that the man who works six days and rests on the seventh, will do more and better work than the man who works without interruption, because the Sabbath is a mental and physical restorative to wearied nature. Thus nations which are so unwise as to sacrifice the day of rest find that instead of promoting their wealth and happiness they have involved themselves in hopeless slavery.

The intervention of Divine justice hardly needed to inflict the penalty for disregard of the Sabbath.

The man who works six days and rests on the seventh will do more and better work than the man who works unceasingly.

The right understanding of the Sabbath also throws light on the true relation of the moral law to the Christian system. That specially Jewish law which related to the Temple service and the Aaronic priesthood, was, we are informed in the

The relation of the moral law to the Christian system.

The Decalogue the rule of life.

New Testament, of temporary obligation only, and was annulled in Christ. But the Decalogue still remains as the rule of life. It is, however, exalted in the teaching of Christ by His directing special attention to the summing up of the whole in the two great commandments, and also by His adding to the second that new sanction, which He calls a new commandment, "Love one another, as I have loved you." So in like manner the old Sabbath becomes the Lord's Day, with the higher sanction of being the memorial of the finished work of redemption, as well as of creation. So spiritualized by the teaching of Christ, and the example of the primitive Church, the Decalogue does not pass away until the time shall come when it will be no more needed, because men shall themselves be like the Lord, when they shall see Him as He is, and because they too, like Him, will have entered into an eternal Sabbatism.

The Decalogue does not pass away till men will have entered into an eternal Sabbatism.

The Lord's Day points forward to the second coming of Christ.

Thus the Lord's Day also in its true significance points forward to the second coming of Christ, and to the New Jerusalem. Christ our Forerunner has entered into His Sabbatism, and that rest remains for us—to be fully enjoyed in that blessed time of the restitution of all things which He is to inaugurate, and when Eden will bloom again, or rather will be replaced by the city of God, which comes down from heaven. Then God's Sabbatism will be fully restored to man never again to be

broken, and the weekly day of rest will be swallowed up in that eternal Sabbatism, of which it is but a feeble and transitory type. Then the day of the Lord will be revealed in its full force and meaning.

The day of rest will then be swallowed up in the eternal Sabbatism.

After what has been said above, it is scarcely necessary to ask the question, What is the relative religious sacredness or obligation of the Lord's Day and the ancient Sabbath? We should, however, regard the former in the full light of the new dispensation. In this, love to God as the reconciled Father in Jesus Christ, takes the place of legal obligation, and the love of our brother is raised to a higher plane by the new commandment of Christ —"Love one another, as I have loved you." We are therefore not surprised to find that in the New Testament the Lord's Day does not appear as a stringent law to be enforced by pains and penalties, but as a loving tribute to our best friend, as a commemoration of the completion of that work of self-sacrifice which has secured for us the highest blessings in this world and that which is to come, as a means of attaining even here to that blessed rest which He has prepared for us, and as a presage of a still happier rest in the future. Such a day cannot be enforced on the unwilling or inappreciative. God may invite them to His feast; but they will make excuse and man cannot force them to partake of it. But is it on this account less sacred than the

The relative obligation of the Lord's Day and the ancient Sabbath.

Why the New Testament does not enforce the Lord's Day by pains and penalties.

The Lord's Day not less sacred than the old Sabbath.

old Sabbath? Is it not rather incomparably more holy? And should it not be one of the highest aims of Christians to guard it for its highest uses,

What Christians should aim at.

and, while entering themselves into that happy Sabbatism of which it is the emblem, to induce all others to accept Christ's gracious invitation to enter into this rest, and to respect the day which is at once its sign and its means of attainment. It is to be feared that inattention to the sacredness of the Lord's Day, and inability to enter into the inward peace and rest which it represents, are besetting evils of our time, and hindrances to our attaining to the highest type of Christianity. We are called on by our Redeemer to enter into rest; but like Israel of old we may fall short of it, and be doomed, because of want of faith, to wander long in the desert of disappointed hopes.

We are called to enter into rest.

"Let us therefore give diligence to enter into that rest, that no man fall after the same example of unbelief."

NOTE.—The writer had not observed, till the foregoing pages were in type, the recent controversy as to the origin of the week, arising from an article by the Bishop of Carlisle in the *Contemporary Review*. No scientific importance can be attached to the hypothesis that the week has a merely astronomical origin. The naming of the days after planets or planetary gods was probably an afterthought, not likely to have suggested itself to primitive man, especially as some of the planets are too inconspicuous to have early attracted attention. The week does not actually correspond with quarters of a lunation; and these are not definite marks of time, like complete revolutions. The week must thus depend, as stated in Genesis, on some different basis from the other divisions of time. These, in so far as days, months, and years are concerned, arise from definite astronomical revolutions, and are, no doubt, of priceless value to man, as the basis of "times and seasons," without which civilisation would have been impossible. But the week and the Sabbath rest on the revealed stages of the creative work, and hence occupy a special place in relation to God's providential procedure, and mark a different connection between man and his Creator from that indicated by the suitableness of merely astronomical arrangement. For this reason the week becomes the basis of other sevenfold divisions of time having a religious significance, as, for example, the Sabbatical year. In the words of Mr. H. Grattan Guinness, "the entire meaning of the Sabbath depends on its connection with the rest of the Creator in a perfected creation, before the entrance of moral evil."

CHRISTIANITY

AND

ANCIENT PAGANISM

BY

J. MURRAY MITCHELL, M.A., LL.D.

Argument of the Tract.

THE comparative study of religions has, in our day, become exceedingly popular; but erroneous ideas are often expressed as to the position which Christianity holds among the various systems of belief.

The subject is of very wide extent. The first thing necessary for its proper discussion is a large induction of fully ascertained facts.

Happily, great progress has recently been made in the investigation of various ancient religions.

The Tract deals with ancient religions that were once widely influential, *but are now extinct.* In the body of the Tract the systems that prevailed among civilized nations are discussed; and, in the note at the end, a brief statement is given of the beliefs and rites of the chief uncivilized races of ancient Europe.

The unique position held among ancient forms of belief by the Jewish religion is pointed out; as well as the relation of that faith to Christianity.

It is shown that the latter came in "the fulness of the time."

Reference is also made to the connection between true religion and civilization.

CHRISTIANITY

AND

ANCIENT PAGANISM.

I.

MUCH attention is paid in our days to the comparative study of Religions. But although now prosecuted with greater zeal than heretofore, it is by no means a new subject of inquiry.

The comparative study of religions not a new one.

The Hebrew prophets frequently drew a contrast between the God of Israel and the idols of the nations; and their cry of exultation was, "Their rock is not as our rock; even our enemies themselves being judges."

The Hebrew prophets contrasted the God of Israel and the idols of the nations.

In like manner the apologists of the early Christian centuries made comparisons between the teaching of Christ and that of Greek and Roman books; and they elaborately placed the pure rites enjoined by the Gospel side by side with the polluted observances of Heathenism.

The early Christian apologists contrasted the teaching and rites of the Gospel and of Heathenism.

Even so, soon after Mohammadanism arose, the

The Koran examined and refuted by Asiatic Christians.

Koran was examined and refuted by Christians living in Asia.[1] Nor was Europe content to combat Islam only with the sword; the book that professed to be a new revelation from heaven was by-and-by translated into Latin and carefully criticized.

The desire of the opponents of Christianity to become acquainted with the sacred books of the East.

In like manner, when Europe became aware of the existence of writings which were regarded as sacred by the nations of the farther East, an earnest desire was felt to become acquainted with their contents. The feeling appears to have been strongest on the part of the opponents of Christianity; and the reason of this is not far to seek. Unbelievers expected that the books of the Oriental nations would prove great repositories of wisdom; for it was a tradition that the philosophers of Greece had drawn much from Eastern sources.

The hope cherished that they would equal, if not surpass, the Jewish and Christian Scriptures.

It was the hope of Voltaire and the French Encyclopedists that the sacred books of Persia, India, and China, would be found equal, if not superior, in religious teaching, to the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. Hence, when Roberto de' Nobili, the nephew of Cardinal Bellarmine, produced the work which he sought to palm off on the Brahmans of Madura as a genuine Veda that had been overlooked, Voltaire was completely taken in, and caused the wonderful book to be twice republished in Europe.[2] Here is an

[1] By Al Kindi and others. [2] At Yverdun and Paris.

Oriental work, said the sage of Ferney, very like the Bible, and at least as good. It is a singular story, though seldom remembered now.

The writings ascribed to Zoroaster translated.

But ere long a genuine Oriental work was conveyed to Europe. Anquetil du Perron returned from his travels in India, bearing as *spolia opima* the writings usually ascribed to the famous Zoroaster. All learned Europe waited in mute expectation for the translation which he at once set about preparing. When, in 1771, the oracle, which had been silent for ages, at length became vocal, the disappointment was infinite; and the general sentiment found expression in the sarcasm of Jones—afterwards the learned Sir William—"Either Zoroaster never wrote these books, or he was not possessed of common sense." The censure was far too sweeping; but, no doubt, the Zoroastrian books were amazingly different from what either Christians or unbelievers had expected they would prove to be.

The disappointment felt with them.

The recent furtherance of the comparative study of religions.

In recent years, various causes have combined to further the comparative study of Religions. For more than forty years, in fact, ever since Grotefend grappled with the cuneiform, and Champollion with the hieroglyphic, inscriptions, steady progress has been made in their interpretation; and a flood of light has been poured on the history of at least seven ancient nations. Oriental scholars have, in the meantime, been

laboriously investigating the sacred writings of China, India, and Persia; and the results of their inquiries have been largely communicated to the public in translations.[1] The subject may be said to be becoming popular; for it is presented in every kind of publication, from the stately review down to the halfpenny newspaper. All this is well, when the study of comparative theology is presented in a truth-loving and candid spirit. The intelligent Christian will by no means take alarm at the result of discovery in this field of investigation, any more than in the field of science. Every new fact he will heartily welcome, though it behoves him—as it behoves all—to scrutinize well the conclusions which may be drawn from facts, whether real or imaginary. One great fault of the age is rash deduction, too hasty generalization. Lord Eldon's favourite maxim would stand us in good stead in other provinces as well as that of Law—*Sat cito si sat bene.*[2]

The subject becoming popular.

The Christian need not take alarm.

Too hasty generalization a fault of the age.

But we must not forget to say that the study of Religions is deeply interesting for another reason. "A man's religion," said Thomas Carlyle, "is the most important thing about him." So we may also say of a community. Therefore, every lover of his kind must watch the movements of the

The importance of religion.

[1] In the *Sacred Books of the East*, Trübner's *Oriental Series*, and many separate publications.

[2] "Soon enough, if well enough."

religious principle in man with keen interest and profound sympathy. How have our brethren in various lands and ages dealt with the duties of life, the trials of life, the perplexing problems of life? What have been their thoughts of God, and of sin, of a world to come? Questions like these are of engrossing interest to every philanthropist. Nor will he be repelled from the inquiry if he find that it is in connexion with religion more than any other subject that we have to deal with the morbid anatomy of human nature, and that the saddest aberrations of the mind have been when engaged in the prosecution of the highest of all questions.

Moral and religious problems all engrossing to the philanthropist.

It is only fair that we should mention at the outset what is the point of view from which we examine the field of inquiry. We believe the Christian Revelation to be unique; *cui nihil viget simile aut secundum*.[1] But that belief by no means involves the consequence that the holder of it should be unfair to other systems of religion. Nay, the very strength of his conviction of the supreme glory of the Gospel, and the assurance that all competition between it and other systems is out of the question, ought to contribute to calmness and impartiality in his judgment of other creeds. In truth, he must be a very narrow-

The Christian revelation unique.

The Christian can be calm and impartial in his judgment of other creeds.

[1] "To whom there exists nothing similar or second." So Horace, speaking of Jupiter as supreme.

minded Christian who looks on Pagan systems as merely masses of unrelieved falsehood. Why should they be so? The Christian believes, and many who do not call themselves Christians believe with him, that there was given to man a primeval Revelation; is it probable that no fragments of it have been borne down the stream of time? Again, there is such a thing as the light of nature. Reason and conscience are in man—most precious gifts of heaven. They often speak, alas! only in whispers; but to the listening ear those whispers are audible. The Christian then should expect to find, and he should rejoice to find, that heathen systems are not, of necessity, all "dark as Erebus."

Fragments of primeval revelation may have been borne down the stream of time.

Reason and conscience gifts of heaven.

It is instructive to note how differently, at different times, the point now before us has been regarded. We could not expect that the Hebrew prophets, in vindicating the claims of Jehovah against Baal or Chemosh, would carefully search for redeeming points in the idolatries around them; fidelity to God and humankind demanded that they should dwell on their baseness and corruption, and denounce them with righteous, vehement indignation. Parleying—temporizing—philosophizing would have been as ridiculous as ruinous. Your man of science can prove that there is heat in ice; but we do not, on that account, enter an ice-house to warm ourselves.

The relation of the Hebrew prophets to the idolatries around them.

But it is remarkable how soon a calm and philo-

sophic estimate of Heathenism was actually formed. The statements on this subject by the first and greatest of all missionaries to the heathen are broad, wise, and comprehensive. Even those who question the inspiration of St. Paul must admire his calmness and impartiality in dealing with a subject on which surely, if on any, his feelings might have been expected to carry him away. The teaching of the Apostle as to Heathenism may be summed up under five heads. He declares that

The formation of a calm and philosophic estimate of Heathenism.

The teaching of the Apostle Paul about Heathenism.

1st. The invisible things of God, even His eternal power and Godhead, are clearly seen, being understood from the things that are made.

2nd. The Gentiles, when they knew God, glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful. They did not like to retain God in their knowledge.

3rd They therefore became vain in their imaginations (reasonings), and their foolish heart (*i.e.* understanding) was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they became fools.

4th. They then changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and quadrupeds, and reptiles,—worshipping and serving the creature rather than the Creator.

5th. All moral corruption followed. They were given over to a reprobate mind, to do those things that are not fitting.[1]

The Apostle's statement a just historical account.

We believe the Apostle's statement to be a just historical account of the origin and progress of Pagan idolatry—a key which, better than any other we know, unlocks the secret of Heathenism, and best explains its strange and manifold contradictions. At the same time, while true as a whole, true of the mass, we do not suppose that St. Paul intended it to apply to every individual Pagan.

Exceptional cases recognised by him.

He asserts, indeed, that there are "Gentiles who have no [written] law, but show the work of the law written on their hearts." Let us hope that those who "seek after God, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him," have throughout the ages been no inconsiderable number. And let us rest assured that the eye of the all-compassionate God rested graciously on all such. Only let us remember that these exceptional men, if they found God, did so, not because of their sad environment, but in spite of it.

St. Paul's spirit shared by many Christian writers.

When we come later down we find not a few Christian writers dealing with Paganism in the spirit of St. Paul. The earlier Fathers acknow-

[1] Compare the striking language of Cicero with that of the Apostle. Multi de diis prava sentiunt; *id enim vitioso more effici solet.—Tusc.* i. 13. (Many have wrong notions of the gods; for that usually springs from vicious morals.)

ledged that there were pure elements in Heathenism; and these they attributed to the truth diffused among men by Christ, the Word.[1] It was, however, the philosophy rather than the religion of Greece in which the fathers found "a trace of wisdom and an impulse from God."[2] Yet certain of the Fathers, especially the vehement Tertullian, gave no quarter, either to the one or the other.

The pure elements in Heathenism attributed to the truth diffused by Christ—the Word.

In modern days, there long existed a disposition to paint non-Christian systems in the darkest colours. Thus, Mohammad was regarded as having been, from the outset, a deep designing impostor, animated by mere selfishness and ambition, and dexterously trimming his sails as the wind chanced to blow from a Pagan, a Jewish, or a Christian quarter. We have since learned that the problem of his mixed character and lamentable fall is not to be solved so easily.

The modern disposition to paint non-Christian systems in the darkest colours.

This mode of dealing with Gentile religions continued at least as far down as the days of Milton. When we remember the lavish use which the great poet makes of Greek and Roman mythology, we are hardly prepared for the summary condemnation of Pagan faith which he pronounces both in his earlier and later writings. Thus, speaking of the god Osiris as terrified at the birth of Christ, he summarily dismisses him to his proper place:

This lasted till Milton's days.

[1] The λόγος σπερματικός.

[2] So Clement of Alexandria (Clark's Edition), vol. I. p. 49.

> Nor is Osiris seen
> In Memphian grove or green,
> Trampling the unshowered grass with lowings loud;
> Nor can he be at rest
> Within his sacred chest,—
> Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud.

Pagan systems traced by Milton to the influence of fallen angels.

Even so, he traces the origin of Pagan systems to the influence of the fallen angels, and briefly stigmatizes them all as

> Gay religions full of pomp and gold,
> And devils to adore for deities.

A great reaction has taken place of late years to an opposite extreme.

Gradually, however, and especially of late years, a great reaction has taken place. The pendulum, which swung too far in one direction, now threatens to reach the opposite extreme. It is high time to call for a reaction from the reaction.

The principle that "there is some soul of goodness in things evil," is applied to cases which assuredly were not in Shakespeare's eye when he put the words into the mouth of King Henry.

Evil is not good in the making.

We are now told that evil is "good in the making." Evil, indeed, is often compelled, in the overruling providence of God, to bring about results very different from what the evil-doer sought to reach; but surely evil is, in itself, intrinsically, eternally hateful. Now, this tendency to find some good in all things leads many far astray in the study of Heathen systems. What is black as midnight is often declared to be only a somewhat deeper shade of grey.

We frequently hear of a gradual development of spiritual truth parallel to the progress of civilization. All, or at least most, of the great Religions of the world are held to have contributed their share to the advancement of true religion. Thus, Christianity is only the last in the series—the last as yet, though possibly destined to give place, ere long, to a system still more exalted and refined.

Christianity is regarded as a product of a gradual development.

The hypothesis of Evolution has taken such possession of the mind of multitudes, that they push it—as if it were an established truth—into regions in which the principle, whether true or false, can bear no legitimate sway. It is frequently maintained that all human things advance by calm, orderly steps, with slight, if any, evidence of a pause, none of retrogression. But history denies this. It is of course true that, taken in its wide extent, humanity moves on, as Wordsworth says,

History denies that all human things advance by calm and orderly steps without pause.

> With an ascent and progress *in the main.*

Humanity advances in the main.

But if many races have risen, some have remained stationary, and others have sunk. True, in art and science there has been a great advance on the whole. But we must not forget that many of the highest attainments of the human mind were made long ages ago. Thus Egypt and the East[1] handed over their sculpture, architecture, and other arts to Greece; and there they rapidly attained an ex-

Many of the highest attainments made ages ago.

[1] **Egypt**, Phœnicia, Lydia, Assyria.

cellence which has not been equalled in the lapse of two thousand years. Again, the poetry of Homer, the oratory of Demosthenes, the speculative power of Aristotle and Plato; are not these still unequalled, or at all events unsurpassed? In intellect, imagination, taste, the Greeks, we venture to say, have excelled all other races. They were inventive too; but their originality was controlled by an exquisite sense of fitness, proportion, harmony.

The intellect, imagination, and taste of the Greeks.

The continuous progress of art and science, then, is purely imaginary. Knowledge has increased; intellect has not. It was of yore that genius plumed her pinions for her highest flight; and succeeding generations have gazed enviously upward, as they have seen her

The continuous progress of art and science purely imaginary.

> Sailing with supreme dominion,
> Through the azure deep of air.

In other words, Almighty God was pleased to impart to the ancient Greeks more of inventive and reasoning power, and a more acute perception of the beautiful, than to any other race. Nor does it appear probable that any future generation will surpass, or even equal them in the higher intellectual endowments.

The Greeks not likely to be surpassed in the higher intellectual endowments.

These considerations certainly do not predispose us to expect that we shall ever be able to trace a regular, continuous development of religion among the nations. We need not be surprised if we find,

in many cases, not improvement, but deterioration. And there is not the slightest ground for the assertion that Christianity is only the latest addition to an edifice that has been slowly rising throughout the ages, and to which most, or at least many, nations have contributed. On the contrary, it can be demonstrated that, when we distinguish between religion and mere intellectual culture,[1]

Things demonstrably true of Christianity.

1st. There is no truth in any other religion which does not shine forth with brighter light in Christianity;

2nd. Christianity has borrowed no truth from any Pagan creed; and

3rd. Every system except Christianity mingles much error along with the truth that it maintains.[2]

We ought, perhaps, to state here that we regard

[1] It will be seen as we proceed that we do not overlook the importance, or question the value, of intellectual culture. It is an essential element in modern civilization.

Intellectual culture an essential element of modern civilization.

Nor let it be forgotten that the Socratic ethics—especially as elaborated in the later Stoic schools—powerfully affected the Roman jurists, and through them the legislation of modern Europe.

Socratic Ethics.

[2] Whether any portion of the Jewish *ritual* was drawn from Egypt is a different question. The symbolism that is seen in the *cherub* has parallels among various nations—Egyptians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians, etc. That it was borrowed is not proved. The so-called Egyptian *ark*, which was a boat, had a very different use from the Jewish ark.

Derivation of Jewish ritual.

Judaism and Christianity regarded as one religion.

Judaism and Christianity—the former as contained in the Old Testament, the latter in the New—as one religion,—one in the sense in which the rosebud and the expanded rose, the "bright consummate flower," are only one. Or we may say, they are related to each other, as dawn is to sunrise.

The Tract deals with extinct forms of Ancient Paganism.

Our Tract deals with "Christianity and Ancient Paganism." By Ancient Paganism we here mean those forms of Paganism which existed in ancient days, but are now extinct. There are other systems which existed in antiquity and have survived to the present time. The most noted of these are Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. We do not treat of these.[1]

It were well, if it were only possible, to discuss the ancient religions in a strictly chronological order. We could then better ascertain how much or how little the later systems had been indebted to the earlier. We shall keep this in mind; but it is difficult, in some cases, to state the historic sequence.

II.

Extinct Pagan religions.

The great religions of Pagan antiquity that are now extinct were the following: the Egyptian; the Babylonian and Assyrian; the Phœnician; the Lydian and Phrygian; the Hittite; the Greek, and

[1] Each of these systems forms the subject of a separate Tract in the Present Day Series (Nos. 25, 33, 46, 18).

the Roman. The religions of the Syrians, Moabites, and other races in and around Palestine may be considered along with that of the Phœnicians. Those of the chief uncivilized races of ancient Europe—Celtic, Teutonic, and Sclavonian—must be treated, if at all, very briefly, seeing that our knowledge of them is still very scanty.

The religion of uncivilized races.

1. The Egyptian System.

We begin with the Egyptian system. Civilization seems to have commenced in the region of Mesopotamia; but the earliest monuments of it that have come down to us are connected with the valley of the Nile.

The earliest monuments of civilization connected with the valley of the Nile.

The religion of Egypt presents very perplexing problems. One of these is its extraordinary inconsistency. In some writings we meet with ideas of deity which are excessively refined—refined till they have become impalpable and colourless; in others, we find polytheism in as debased a form as that in which it appears among the lowest savages. More remarkable still, we find these two things not only existing at the same time, but expressed in the same writings. Hence, vehement debate among Egyptologists. Most of them hold that the refined conceptions came first, and that the latter form was a corruption gradually introduced. It is at least certain, as one of the strongest supporters[1] of the

Inconsistency of the religion of Egypt.

Vehement debate among Egyptologists.

[1] M. Maspero.

Monotheistic ideas probably the first in Egypt.

opposite theory admits, that monotheistic ideas made their way very early into Egypt. It appears to us that the balance of the evidence is in favour of their having been there first.

Two distinct races probably originally inhabited Egypt.

But it is not improbable that the population of Egypt consisted of two races originally distinct, one mentally lower, probably African, and another much higher, probably Asiatic Shemites. In that case the religion was composite and inconsistent from the beginning.

The refined system has by most been called monotheism; by others, henotheism. Others still call it pantheism. The dispute need not surprise us; for the conceptions expressed in Egyptian monuments are vague, confused, conflicting; nor does it appear probable that any deeper study will ever prove them to be mutually consistent.

The conceptions in Egyptian monuments vague, confused, conflicting.

Early appearance of Sun-worship.

Sun-worship unquestionably appears early. This, and the reverence of metaphysical deities, are mingled together even on the oldest monuments.

Abundance of symbolism.

Above all systems that ever were, the Egyptian abounded in symbolism. Every idea, every shadow of an idea, had to be represented—made visible. The faith had then to pay the penalty of this mental weakness. The sign, ere long, concealed the thing signified—it became its substitute.

A concealed spiritual system ascribed to the priests.

Many writers contend that the higher classes—or at all events, the priests—were acquainted with a truly spiritual system, which they carefully con-

cealed from the common people. This is possible. *Populus vult decipi et decipiatur*[1] is a hideous maxim which, doubtless, has had sway in various lands. But there is no evidence of the intentional concealment of higher truths on the part of the Egyptian priests. It was no function of theirs to educate the people; and probably the masses could not rise above the lowest form of brute-worship. Nor did the priests and the higher classes themselves really rise above it; they only succeeded, in a way difficult for us to conceive, in mingling higher and lower conceptions, and so identifying the divinity with the brute. The religion changed; it changed more than is at first apparent, for the Egyptians were very conservative of ancient *forms;* but the degrading brute-worship endured as long as any part of the religion. The same animals, however, were not adored over the whole of the country; some which were worshipped at one place were pursued and killed at another; and hence violent disputes often ending in bloodshed. But we need not pursue the subject farther. We merely add that even the Greeks and the Romans were shocked by the Egyptian worship. Plutarch gravely reprobates its "degrading rites;" and the poet Juvenal levels against it his sharpest shafts of ridicule.[2]

Not the function of the Egyptian priests to educate the people.

The priests mingled higher and lower conceptions and identified the divinity with the brute.

Greeks and Romans shocked by Egyptian worship.

[1] The people wish to be deceived, and let them be so.

[2] Who has not heard, where Egypt's realms are named,
What monster gods her frantic sons have framed? etc.

The Egyptian religion grew more and more mystical and magical

In the course of its long existence the religion became more and more mystical, and more and more magical. Thus, in the "Book of the Dead," the most remarkable document which has come down from the ancient days of Egypt, comparatively little is said of duties, but much of spells and incantations.

Good moral precepts here and there in books and monuments.

There are, no doubt, as was to be expected, many good moral precepts scattered here and there, in books and on monuments. But "the morality remained stationary at the elementary stage; and its moral maxims never rise to the rank of principles."[1] "The morality must have been totally independent of the religion."[1] No divorce could have been more unhappy; and we need not wonder that the naked ethical maxim often remained impotent, while "a thousand superstitions took the place of the attempt to lead an honest life."[2]

The morality stationary at the elementary stage, and independent of religion.

More use of priestly power.

The priests, in the original constitution of Egypt, had comparatively little power. That power, however, steadily increased, until everything in life was ruled by them. In Upper Egypt they, by-and-by, usurped full regal authority; and they retained it long.

[1] So Prof. Tiele.

[2] Poole, in *Encycl. Britan.* The same writer says that we have, in the "Book of the Dead," "a glimpse of truth seen through thick mists peopled with phantoms of basest superstition."

Liberty of women often ran into license.

Women in Egypt were allowed much liberty; but evidently it often ran into license. This was especially the case during the pilgrimage to Bubastis, which Herodotus tells us was by far the most popular and magnificent of Egyptian festivals. Evil ran riot during this great celebration.[1] Truly, religion and morality were separable and separate in ancient Egypt. Monogamy was the rule, but concubinage was frequent. Brother and sister often intermarried.

Egypt contributed no element of truth to the establishment of the final form of religion.

And now, is there any element of truth which Egypt contributed towards the establishment of the final form of religion? We have seen that this is frequently maintained; but the belief seems to have no foundation. If, as Diodorus held, the Greeks derived their religion from Egypt, they entirely changed it; they humanized the gods, instead of keeping them brutal. The idea that Moses, who was skilled in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, drew any of his lofty conceptions of Jehovah from Egyptian sources, was often loudly asserted in former days; but it seems now generally abandoned even by critics of the negative school, like Kuenen. Wellhausen, too, distinctly affirms that "Moses gave no new idea of God to his people. The question whence he derived it could not possibly be worse answered than by a reference

The idea that Moses drew any of his lofty conceptions of Jehovah from Egyptian sources abandoned even by negative critics.

[1] Tiele, *Egyptian Religion*, p. 192.

Wellhausen maintains that Jehovah has nothing in common with the deities of Egypt.

to his relations with the priestly caste and their wisdom." He maintains that Jehovah has nothing in common with the deities of Egypt. Of course, we do not forget that the multitude who had long been familiar with the brute worship around them, began to adore the golden calf; but we know that the degrading rite was suppressed with a sternness of indignation which must have profoundly impressed the whole of that generation and many succeeding ones.

The worship of Osiris and Ra formed the basis of the Egyptian religion.

The religion, as has been said, sustained great changes.[1] In the oldest monuments Osiris and Ra are mentioned; their worship formed the basis of the religion. Each is a divine being revealing himself in the sun.[2] They are often confounded with each other. Afterwards, eight deities were classed in the first order; twelve in the second; and four in the third. The highest of the first order was Amn or Amun (usually said to mean *concealed*). He has properly the form of man; he sits with crown and sceptre on a throne, and holds in his hand a kind of cross, which is the symbol of *life*.

[1] De Rougé and not a few others trace the high spiritual conceptions of God to primeval Revelation; and they point to evidences of a gradual corruption of these. Tiele admits that the most ancient system was the simplest and purest. And yet he calls the corruption of this "a retrogression to the earlier stand-point." He thus holds that purity first grew out of impurity, and then impurity out of purity. The explanation is forced. De Rougé's is far more simple and consistent.

[2] Tiele, p. 44.

He was often united with Ra, and became Amun-Ra—the hidden one who is revealed in the sun. Most of the deities had animals' heads, which were probably symbols of qualities.

Osiris the chief deity in the time of Herodotus.

By the time of Herodotus Osiris had become the chief deity. Isis was his mother, sister, and wife. Her worship steadily increased. The myth of Osiris was the mother-myth in Egypt. He was said to have been killed and buried, his body having been cut in pieces, which were scattered. He revived, and became the judge of the dead. The future life greatly occupied the mind of the Egyptians. As time went on, the myth of Osiris became more terrible; and the views entertained of a future existence more and more gloomy. In the "Book of the Dead" the adventures of the departed soul came to be described with appalling minuteness of detail. It is important to note that there was no idea of God as forgiving sin. The wicked soul was devoured by serpents, cast into flames, or otherwise destroyed. The good man himself had to encounter sore trials in the other world. Snares lay in his path; monsters assailed him. His safety lay in grasping the sacred spear, and repeating magical words from the sacred books. Thus, at last he reached the happy fields, in which he could labour as on earth, but reap harvests far more abundant than he had done before.

The myth of Osiris the mother-myth in Egypt.

The future life greatly occupied the Egyptian mind.

The departed soul in the "Book of the Dead."

The principle of moral retribution accepted.

In estimating the character of the Egyptian system, the doctrine of a future life must, by no means, be left out of account. The principle of moral retribution was accepted; and if Greece really borrowed it from Egypt, she did not retain so firm a hold of it. But we would gladly know how the belief affected men during life, and in the prospect of death. The Egyptian deities were strictly, sternly just. What then, as he faced the regions of Amenti—the other world—were the thoughts of a man who had, on the whole, sought to live virtuously, but who, like all of us, had "bitter thoughts of conscience born?" We remember the triumphant language of the prophet Micah—"Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity?" and even, in the earliest days of Israel, the mercy of Jehovah was declared in equally emphatic terms with His righteousness.[1] Now, of mercifulness, in the sense of forgiving sin, there is no trace whatever in the Egyptian conception of the divine. Surely a most marked deficiency.

No trace of mercifulness in the sense of forgiving sin in the Egyptian conception of the Divine.

The usual explanation of the impression of the future world on the Egyptian mind.

The strong impression which the future world made on the Egyptian mind is very noteworthy. Whence could it spring? The usual explanation is that it was "nothing but a mystic representation, arising out of sun-worship."[2] The sun sank

[1] See Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7.

[2] Tiele, p. 70.

in the west and disappeared; he died. Yet he was not destroyed; he moved across the dark under-world, and soon, with undiminished brightness, "flamed in the forehead of the morning sky."[1] So every good man would triumph over death. Such is the explanation; but it seems to halt. For though day succeeds night, night again succeeds day; and if the solar phenomenon had been the foundation of the belief, we should have expected a balanced dualism, victory and defeat alternating in a perpetually renewed struggle between light and darkness, life and death, good and evil. We believe that in Amun, the "hidden one," we can still trace an early conception of the supreme divinity, brought, probably, by the Shemites from the plains of Shinar. The sun was naturally turned to as a representative of Amun; and they were often blended into one—Amun Ra, the hidden and revealed in one. The other deities seem to have been personified attributes. With regard to belief in a future existence it seems necessarily to accompany a belief in deity.

The explanation halting.

An early conception of the Supreme Divinity. Amun—the hidden one.

Belief in a future existence seems necessarily to accompany a belief in deity.

We cannot say that the character of the Egyptians stood high, either intellectually or morally. No writing of theirs survives which betokens genius or even deep thought. They had massive, not graceful, architecture. Art soon became stationary. In later ages there was an

The character of the Egyptians.

[1] Milton, in *Lycidas*.

Elements in Egyptian character.

incongruous blending of Egyptian and Grecian architecture. Plodding, patient, industrious, they doubtless were. But they were also tyrannical; given to wine; and careless in morals. Some add, and not without reason, "lying, thieving, treacherous, cringing, and intensely prejudiced against strangers."[1]

The sovereign and the people.

In Egypt we may behold a despot ruling a nation of slaves. The sovereign reigned as representing divinity. Limitation of his power was simply inconceivable.[2] In no nation, ancient or modern—not in ancient Assyria or modern Turkey—was "the right divine of kings"[3] so deeply implanted in the mind of the subjects.

2. Babylonian and Assyrian Systems.

The religion of Babylon and Assyria.

We come now to speak of the religion of Babylon and Assyria.

The Tigro-Euphrates valley, with its streams and rich alluvial plains, was a very early seat of civilization. Monuments exist which may carry us as far back as three thousand years before the Christian era, or probably farther. The first inhabitants

The antiquity of existing monuments.

[1] So R. S. Poole, in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible.*

[2] Tiele points out how unlike Egypt was to Israel in this respect. The existence of the prophetic order secured to Israel almost a constitutional government, or its equivalent.

[3] The right divine of kings to govern wrong."

appear, from the evidence of language, to have been Turanian, rather than Shemitic—their language being of the Ural-Altaic class. The name Akkadian (mountaineer) is now usually given to them. Another important tribe, evidently Shemitic, then pressed into those fertile regions—probably from the Syro-Arabian desert. The two races appear to have mingled in Southern Chaldæa, and a high degree of civilization was early attained.

The first inhabitants Turanian.

A Shemitic tribe pressed into those regions.

Their religion bore abundant traces of their double origin. The Akkadian faith—like Turanian systems generally—was Animistic or Shamanistic, that is to say, fundamentally, spirit-worship. Every object in nature, whether animate or inanimate, was supposed to be ruled by a spirit. Malignant spirits were especially numerous; many of them ghosts, that is, the spirits of the dead. The spirits, however, were all subject to the control of a priest, or wizard. By the power of spells and incantations, the wizard could compel them to do his bidding. The Akkadian liturgies that have been preserved are almost all exorcisms—mere magical formulæ.

Traces of double origin of the religion

The Akkadian liturgies all exorcisms.

The Shemitic race, that came in later and largely blended with the Akkadians, had a religion of a higher type. M. Renan has asserted that all Shemites had a monotheistic instinct; but the assertion cannot be accepted unless the term monotheism be divested of its ordinary meaning. Most

The Shemitic race had a religion of a higher type.

Most of the Shemitic races idolatrous and polytheistic.

of the Shemitic races have been conspicuously idolatrous, as well as polytheistic; and if it be said that one deity was almost always regarded as superior to the rest, the same assertion may be made regarding other than Shemitic peoples.[1]

The sun-god among the Shemites who occupied Chaldæa.

The sun-god held a high place among the Shemites who occupied Chaldæa; and the moon-god, one almost equally high. In countries like Arabia and Chaldæa, the magnificence of the starry heavens, and the moon "walking in her brightness," compel attention by their mystery, their beauty, and their beneficence.[2] We cannot be surprised if, with the mass, admiration passed into adoration. Astronomy was studied, and it became astrology—one might say, inevitably so.

Life in Babylon.

The Babylonian faith continued to show clear traces of its twofold origin. Life in Babylon must have been "almost intolerable;"[3] superstition conjured up a thousand terrors; unseen malignant beings were everywhere, and everywhere plotting mischief. Hence, magic early became developed into a regular science. Divination, augury, fortune-telling, necromancy, and kindred base beliefs flourished in foul luxuriance.

The early development of magic.

[1] Thus, Herr Jellinghaus, a missionary who spent years among the Kols in India, says they may almost be classed as monotheists. They believe in innumerable spirits, but in the sun-spirit as supreme.

[2] Very notable in this connexion are the words in Job xxxi. 26–28.

[3] So Prof. Sayce.

"Stand now," exclaims the prophet Isaiah, addressing Babylon, "with thine enchantments and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth." [1]

The prophet also calls on the "astrologers, the star-gazers, and the monthly prognosticators," to foretell, if they can, and avert, the destruction which was fast overtaking the haughty city. It would appear that in the court of Nebuchadnezzar, the highest place was given to expounders of dreams, soothsayers, and astrologers; and that only after them came the civil administrators of the empire.

The place of interpreters of dreams, etc., at the court of Nebuchadnezzar.

The doctrine of one God shines out clear and unmistakable in various important documents. In Smith's *Chaldean Account of Genesis* this is very fully shown.

The doctrine of one God in various important documents.

"At the head of the Babylonian theology stands Anu—a deity who is sometimes identified with the heavens—sometimes considered as the Ruler and God of heaven."

In one important part of the tablet recording creation, only one God is mentioned, and simply as "the God." The fragments of the tablet "might belong to the purest system of religion." These are important statements. It would be very interesting if we could determine the date of the remarkable document on which Mr. Smith thus comments. Professor Sayce thinks that the poem on creation (*Chaldean Genesis*) is not probably older than the days of Assur-bani-pal, the grandson of

In the tablet recording creation the only one God is mentioned as "the God."

[1] Isaiah xlvii. 12.

The date of the poem on Creation.

Sennacherib—which would bring it down to the 7th century B.C.; but he also holds that similar views prevailed at a much earlier date among the Akkadians. The professor speaks of the time when monotheistic ideas "arose." The question, however, is whether they had not existed from the beginning, at least among the Shemitic portion of the people. We believe that God had "never left Himself without witness," and that there was, in addition to this, a monotheistic tradition. There, doubtless, was a vacillation, an oscillation, between monotheism and polytheism; but the former belief, though frequently overlaid, was never wholly extinguished. Such is the inference which we feel ourselves compelled to draw from all the available evidence.

God's witness to Himself and monotheistic tradition.

Monotheistic belief never extinguished.

The worship of Anu was gradually superseded. His daughter was Istar (Ashtaroth or Astarte), connected with whom there was a far more sensual worship than that of Anu. This in time supplanted the older and purer system.[1] All this is easily understood; but if we hold that the worship of one God arose out of gross polytheism, and then sank back into it, we are landed in inextricable difficulties.

The difficulty of supposing that the worship of one God arose out of polytheism and then sank back into it

[1] "The worship of Istar became one of the darkest features of Babylonian theology. As this worship increased in favour, it gradually superseded that of Anu, until in time his temple—the house of heaven—came to be regarded as the temple of Venus."—*G. Smith.*

When the great monotheistic idea is surrendered, deities easily multiply. We need not give a list of Babylonian gods. Merodach seems to have been a national divinity, the protector of Babylon; and with him was probably identified Bel, whose name is generally supposed to be a variant form of Baal, *i.e., master, owner.*

The multiplication of deities resulting from the surrender of monotheism.

Certain parts of Babylonian worship were excessively impure. There was a law in Babylon that every woman, once in her life, should prostitute herself to any stranger that asked her in the temple of the chief goddess. Even Herodotus denounces the practice as "in the highest degree abominable." It seems to have been from Babylon that the horrible pollution passed over into Greece and Sicily, and various other places.

Impurity of Babylonian worship.

The Assyrian nation was greatly influenced by the Babylonian, which evidently was the older of the two.[1] The people have been well called "the Romans of Asia."[2] They were a nation of ferocious warriors, in whose nature cruelty seems to have been ingrained. They blinded, impaled, tortured, or flayed alive, their prisoners; while the Egyptians, we may note, were by no means so merciless. Their character was reflected in their religion. Human sacrifices were frequent.

The character of the Assyrian nation.

Magic, sorcery, and divination were hardly less prevalent in Assyria than in Babylon. The pro-

Magic, etc. in Assyria.

[1] As stated in Genesis x. 11. [2] By G. Rawlinson.

phet Nahum, in his magnificent description of the siege and capture of Nineveh, the capital, styles it "the mistress of witchcrafts."

3. Phœnician System.

The chief divinity of the Phœnicians.

We next speak of the Phœnicians, who were early distinguished as an enterprizing commercial people. We are still doubtful as to their origin and their relation to the other Canaanite races. Their chief divinity was Baal—also called Moloch, who seems to have been the sun-god. The sun could be viewed as a beneficent being, or as a relentless tyrant flaming with wrath; and generally, or at all events frequently, he was regarded in the latter aspect. Only blood—human blood—could appease the anger of the deity when it was deeply roused. Hence the priests scourged and gashed themselves; and his votaries strove to propitiate him by sacrificing their best and dearest. Milton's celebrated description is not drawn in colours over-dark:

Their worship.

> Moloch, horrid king, bedewed with blood
> Of infant sacrifice and parents' tears,
> Though, for the noise of drums and cymbals loud,
> The children's cries unheard that passed through fire
> To his grim idol.

Human sacrifices.

The firstborn especially were thus sacrificed, and on occasions of great public calamity multitudes of youths of the noblest families were burnt alive. Thus at Carthage, which was colonized from Tyre,

when Agathocles had inflicted a severe defeat on the citizens, at least two hundred children of the noblest birth were sacrificed;[1] and when, in turn, the Carthaginians had gained a victory, their most beautiful captives were in like manner offered up. Our readers will remember the frequent mention of this dreadful rite in the Old Testament. Among Shemitic races, the Hebrews alone were taught to hold it in abhorrence.

Old Testament references.

This terrible hardness of character was accompanied—might we not say caused?[2]—by another leading characteristic of Phœnician worship—its shameful lasciviousness. It equalled in this respect, if it did not surpass, the Babylonian system. We cannot dwell on the disgusting subject. The old Akkadian religion had been marked by cruelty; but impurity, as an essential part of worship, was foreign to it. This deplorable distinction clung especially to Shemitic races—Israel alone excepted.

The lasciviousness of Phœnician worship.

Israel alone among Shemitic races free from impurity in worship.

The characteristics of the three religions we have mentioned—Babylonian, Assyrian, and Phœnician—belonged in a greater or less degree to the cognate

[1] The language of Diodorus is not quite clear; but, as Grote observes, the number of children offered up was certainly 200, and probably 500. *History of Greece*, VIII., p. 604.

[2] "Lust hard by hate." So Milton. Or, as Robert Burns has it—

I waive the quantum of the sin,
The hazard of concealing;
But oh! it hardens all within,
And petrifies the feeling.

The moral degradation of the seven nations of Canaan.

races—such as Ammonites, Moabites, etc. The "seven nations of Canaan" are mentioned in the Pentateuch as all alike sunk in the depths of moral corruption; so that the land was ready to "spue them out." This renders the severely pure morality of the religion of Israel truly remarkable, and, on naturalistic principles, inexplicable. We have no right to suppose that, in original temperament or character, the Hebrews differed radically from their brethren. By what conceivable process, then, of natural evolution could their religion arise?

The purity of Israelitish religion inexplicable on naturalistic principles.

4. Lydian and Phrygian Systems.

The chief systems in the interior of Asia Minor.

We come now to speak of the chief systems that prevailed in the interior of Asia Minor,[1] particularly in Lydia and Phrygia. In describing these, we require to state carefully the dates to which we refer; for, in those regions, the displacement of races and religions was very frequent. Turanians, Shemites, Aryans, all clashed together within the peninsula. The Turanians came first. But from the 12th to the 7th century B.C., the predominant power in Asia Minor was Assyria; and Assyrian (or Babylonian) ideas on religion were, in consequence, widely diffused, extending even to the Ægean Sea. The Persian dominion followed; and Zoroastrian rites to a considerable

Assyrian ideas widely diffused.

[1] Strabo, who knew the region well, speaks especially of Cappadocia as having adopted Persian rites to a large extent.

extent superseded, or rather, blended with the Assyrian, and also with the still more ancient Turanian worship, which had never been wholly extinguished. It probably was from their Turanian descent that the religions of Lydia and Phrygia were especially marked as passionate and orgiastic. Excitement was wrought up to frenzy by the beating of drums, the clashing of cymbals, and the wildest dances. The worshippers, the priests especially, ran howling, cutting themselves with knives. All this was terribly apt to end in unbridled debauchery. Such was the worship of the Great Mother and the god Sabazios. When these rites, along with the closely allied worship of Dionysus (Bacchus), had been introduced into Rome about the year 176 B.C., the Senate was compelled to suppress them by the strong arm of law as being utterly intolerable.

Zoroastrian rites superseded or blended with the Assyrian and also with the older Turanian.

Turanian origin of Lydian and Phrygian orgies.

5. Hittite System.

Recently most important discoveries have been made regarding the Hittites—a race, or union of races, that rose into power in the 16th century B.C., and for centuries contended valiantly with the Egyptians on the one side and the Assyrians on the other. It might have been hoped that their faith would prove, on investigation, to be of a higher type than the systems

Hittite faith not purer than the others.

which have already passed under review. It is not so, however.

"The religion of the Hittites seems to have been appropriated from the worst features of Babylonian, Phenician, and, latterly, Egyptian idolatry." [1]

We must pause in this sorrowful review. As a well-informed writer puts it,—

The philosophy of the religion of Asia Minor summed up.

"The whole philosophy of the religion of Asia Minor is summed up in three words. We find them engraven on a tomb found at Kotiaïon, in Phrygia: 'This is what I say to my friends: *Give yourselves up to pleasure and enjoyment: live. For you must die. Therefore drink, enjoy, dance.*" [2]

6. Grecian System.

Our intellectual sympathy with the Greeks.

But let us pass on to the fair land of Hellas, and to a people with whom we moderns have far closer intellectual sympathy,—whose thoughts, even when we may not sympathize with them, we can at least understand. The religion of Greece must have been in a large degree derived from Egypt and still more, the East; but the shaping spirit of the highly endowed Greeks entirely changed its original character. It made the deities thoroughly human — gigantic men and women. They had human passions, virtues, vices. They ate and drank, quarrelled and fought, very much as the lively Greeks were accustomed to do among themselves; and these divinities were some-

The religion of Greece derived from Egypt and the East.

The human character of the Greek deities

[1] So Canon Tristram.

[2] *Revue des deux Mondes*, Oct. 1873, p. 936.

times so merry—at a friend's expense, it might be—that "inextinguishable laughter" shook the skies. Such, at least, is the system that appears in the Homeric poems. How far it may have been the production of one, or perhaps two minds, we cannot, with assurance, say; the Greek writers generally ascribed its rise to the joint influence of Homer and Hesiod; but one would think it could only by degrees have assumed its peculiar type. The great popularity of Homer imprinted it deeply on the mind of the people. Changes, however, came on; foreign rites pressed in. Before the Persian war a great alteration was visible in many respects. The earlier Greeks had been a stirring, joyous, careless race, not much occupied with religion; but gradually there came to be magnificent temples, priests, solemn ceremonies, mysteries. Wild orgiastic religions also appeared, or, if not new, they were carried to much greater excess than before,—the worship of Dionysus (Bacchus) for example, of the Thracian goddess Cotytto, and the Syrian god Adonis (Tammuz, as in Ezek. viii. 14).

The system ascribed to the joint influence of Homer and Hesiod.

The character of the earlier Greeks.

Gradual rise of temples, etc.

Orgiastic religions.

In the theology of Homer, as a careful student[1] of the Iliad and Odyssey has admitted, "elements of a profound corruption abound." Later systems were still worse. But philosophy arose. Grave, thoughtful men were shocked at the popular conceptions of deity, and began to denounce them.

Corrupt elements in the theology of Homer.

[1] Mr. Gladstone.

The idea of the divine purged in the hands of the sages.

In the hands of a succession of sages the abstract idea of the divine was more and more purged of base alloy; but, in proportion as it became refined, the notion grew dimmer; until, in the case of Aristotle, deity was a power, or a principle, rather than a person. Even Plato never inquired about the personality of God; he seems rather to think of a diffused soul of the world.[1] But philosophic speculation was not for the common people. Their religion became lower and lower. Offences against God and human nature ere long flourished in rank luxuriance. As both cause and effect of all this, a light scoffing infidelity extended among all the educated. Then patriotism and public spirit died. All that was magnanimous in Greek character faded away; the "hungry Greekling" (*Græculus esuriens*) was ready to say, or do, anything for a bit of bread. Art itself became debased. Even the population began to die out; in various places, in order to prevent fertile regions from being changed into deserts, Roman colonists were brought in; and "shocking immorality was the cancer that ate into the life of Greece."[2]

The debasement of the religion of the common people.

Its consequences.

The retrospect profoundly painful.

The retrospect we have been engaged in is profoundly painful. "Immortal Greece—dear land of glorious lays," exclaims Keble, speaking of the classic poetry with all a poet's passion. Yet notwithstanding her subtle intellect, and vivid imagination

[1] So Zeller. [2] So Thirlwall.

and perfect taste, she sank into an abyss thus fathomless of shame and ruin. Why? Even Byron saw the reason: The abyss of shame and ruin.

> "Enough, no foreign foe could quell
> Thy soul, till from itself it fell,
> And self-abasement paved the way
> To villain bonds and despot sway."

It is through the beautiful we reach the good, said Schiller. Say rather, through the good the beautiful. At all events, when the love of the good has passed away, the perception of the beautiful perishes soon after. This is one of the lessons which is inscribed on the history of Hellas, as if "graven with an iron pen and lead," and so inscribed "in the rock for ever." The lesson of the history of Hellas.

7. Roman System.

We come now to Rome. The Romans were originally in many things different from the Greeks. Less speculative; more practical; simpler, truer, graver; more law-abiding; with a better family life; and possessed of a deeper religious instinct. The early religion of Rome had considerable resemblance to that of Greece, both having sprung out of one Aryan faith; but, for some time, the two systems tended to diverge, each being influenced by its own environment. It is interesting to note that the Roman religion had The character of the Romans. The resemblance of the early religion of Rome to that of Greece.

Points of correspondence with the old Persian.

special points of correspondence with the old Persian, as unfolded in the Zend-avesta.[1] Much more importance was attached to rites than to beliefs or emotions—the worship tending to a punctilious externalism; prayer became a kind of magical formula; much stress was laid on ceremonial purity; the mythology was meagre. A new departure took place towards the end of the regal period. Images were now introduced; and temples, increasing in splendour, began to appear.

The religion becomes more and more political.

The religion became more and more political, and was regulated by the State. But cold formalism could not satisfy the popular mind and heart.

Greek and Asiatic gods press in.

First, Greek and then Asiatic gods and goddesses pressed in. Infidelity succeeded, at least among the higher classes. The poet Ennius, a Calabrian Greek, was among the first to propagate it. During the two centuries that preceded the birth of Christ,

The spread of unbelief and immorality.

unbelief spread like a pestilence, and immorality kept pace with it. Each was both cause and effect of the other. In vain did the elder Cato strive to keep out the infection; in vain did he inveigh against the Greeks as the "parents of every vice;" corruption rushed on, as Augustine says, "like a headlong torrent." Family life greatly changed; divorce became fashionable; and women—in many cases, women of the highest rank—became shame-

[1] So the Zend and Latin languages have special points in common.

less in their degradation. Even noted historical personages, with whose names we do not readily associate the idea of vice, were men of abandoned life. Thus Dr. Arnold speaks with severe reprobation of "the utter moral degradation" of Julius Cæsar. A deep darkness, almost amounting to despair, seemed settling down on the minds of men. Suicide prevailed, in consequence, to an unparalleled extent.

Dr. Arnold on Julius Cæsar.

But the *nemesis* of infidelity is superstition. The old Italic religion had been comparatively pure. Thus in the very name of the chief god, *Jupiter Optimus Maximus,* we find the ideas of supreme goodness and supreme power.[1] But when these had perished, something was felt to be needful in their place; and dark, gloomy faiths—hideous brutal mysteries—from Egypt, Asia Minor, and Babylon—flowed in to fill the intolerable void. In Greece itself, as religion declined, magic and sorcery, its miserable substitutes, had greatly flourished. So in Rome. Conjurors, soothsayers, astrologers, and fortune-tellers filled every street, and insinuated themselves into every household. "Professed atheists trembled in secret at the mysterious power of magical incantations;" many invoked the shades of the dead, or strove to penetrate into the

The *nemesis* of infidelity.

The influx of superstition.

Fears of professed atheists.

[1] So Cicero: Te, Capitoline, quem propter beneficia populus Romanus optimum, propter vim maximum, nominavit.—*Pro domo sua,* c. 57.

secrets of futurity by examining the entrails of a murdered child.[1]

Matthew Arnold's sketch of the mental condition of the higher classes in Rome.

Mr. Matthew Arnold, with a few strokes, has given us a vivid sketch of the mental condition of the higher classes in Rome:

On that hard Pagan world disgust And secret loathing fell,
And weariness and sated lust Made human life a hell.
In his cool hall, with haggard eyes, The noble Roman lay,—
He drove abroad in furious guise Along the Appian Way;
He made a feast, drank fierce and fast, And crowned his hair with flowers—
No easier and no quicker passed The impracticable hours.

Renan's testimony.

M. Renan's testimony is the same. He states that, under the empire, Rome became a very hell (*un vrai enfer*).

Greek and Roman philosophy.

It may, perhaps, be thought that in the preceding estimate we have overlooked the value of Greek and Roman philosophy. On that head, then, we still add a few words.

Stoicism.

Morally, the best philosophical system was Stoicism. We have spoken above of the value of this philosophy in the development of jurisprudence. The later Stoicism certainly enunciated various important principles in ethics. Thus the cosmopolitan idea—the conception of man as man—was not foreign to it. It admitted that slaves were not mere things, but possessed of rights. Stoicism did not readily lose itself in speculation; it clung firmly to the idea of duty, and was intensely prac-

The conception of man as man not foreign to it.

[1] Merivale's *History of Rome*, vol. II. p. 514.

tical. Seneca expresses sentiments which have so much of a Christian ring that many have held that he must have derived them from intercourse with St. Paul; though that is scarcely probable.

The Christian ring of Seneca's sentiments.

We must cherish for such men as Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius that kind of wondering regard with which we think of Buddha. Seneca, however, was a mere rhetorician; his fine periods were flatly contradicted by his life.

Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius.

But Stoicism cherished an immeasurable pride; and it wrapped itself in an icy, self-worshipping selfishness. Its theology was pantheistic,[1] really, if not confessedly. It held that all things were ruled by the iron necessity of fate. On the whole, the most favourable estimate that can possibly be formed of this haughty philosophy is that of Reuss:

The pride of Stoicism.

> "The fine ideas of Roman Stoicism were buds which only the sun of the Gospel could develop into beauty and perfection; but which, if left alone, would never have produced rich fruits."

Reuss's estimate of Stoicism.

We have thus failed to trace in the great Pagan systems of antiquity any grand conceptions which Christianity did or could incorporate with itself. At the same time, there were in most, or all, of them what have been called "unconscious prophecies"[2] of better things. Prophecies, or even anticipations, in any strict sense of the word, these assuredly were not; but they were questionings,

"Unconscious prophecies" of better things in Paganism.

[1] So Zeller. [2] By Archbishop Trench especially.

A conscious emptiness of the heart.

yearnings, aspirations—a feeling that the heart was empty, and the desire, sometimes the hope, that it might yet be filled. And HE who sees the end from the beginning, was all the while preparing to answer those questions, satisfy those cravings, and fulfil, yea exceed, the highest anticipations ever formed by

> The prophetic soul
> Of the wide world, dreaming on things to come.

The coming of Christ.

Christ came, says St. Paul, "in the fulness of the time." For His coming, it is easy to see that a

The age-long preparation for it.

manifold preparation had been made, extending throughout the ages. With a view to this grand consummation, the kingdoms of the world had risen and fallen. All things had been "shaken,"[1] in order that the false and the fleeting might be shaken off, and that the true and the eternal might have room to grow and unfold their holy beauty.

It was indeed "the fulness of the time," in the largest sense of these significant words; but we must here limit our view to religion, and one aspect of the "fulness."

Commingling of creeds consequent on the conquests of Alexander and extension of Roman dominion.

We have seen the deplorable condition into which each of the great religions of Paganism had fallen. The conquests of Alexander the Great, and the extension of Roman dominion, had led largely to a commingling of creeds. Traces of Oriental systems could be found even in Britain.

[1] Haggai ii. 6, 7.

No happy results from the union of eastern and western thought.

But the union of eastern and western thought had produced no happy results. Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Phenicia, Lydia, Phrygia, Greece, Rome —these and other nations had toiled, as we may express it, to scale the heavens and there find God; but every attempt had ended in vanity and vexation of spirit. We can hardly feel surprise that the difficulty of ascertaining truth and the endless conflict of opinion led many thoughtful men to discard the consideration of religion altogether. Why should they pursue a shadow that ever eluded their grasp? What Justin Martyr says of the philosophers of his time—the commencement of the second century—applies with equal force to the century preceding:

The difficulty of ascertaining truth led many to discard the consideration altogether.

Justin Martyr on the philosophers of his time.

"Most of the philosophers never consider the question whether there be one God or many; whether there be a Divine Providence or not."

Thus, growing scepticism among the educated, and grosser and grosser superstition among the common people, were the melancholy characteristics of the age which ushered in the Christian era.

The world not forsaken by God.

But God had not forsaken the world. He had, as St. Paul expresses it, "suffered all nations to walk in their own ways,"[1] though, at the same time, He had "never left Himself without witness." The history of the race bears, in several respects, a resemblance to that of an individual. Man is very

[1] Acts xiv. 16.

proud; he will not seek the help of God until he feels himself helpless. To the question of the patriarch, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" he would boldly have answered, Yes, until he had repeatedly failed in the proud attempt. More than three thousand years had passed since, in Chaldea and Egypt, he had first essayed the great problem; and the demonstration of the necessity of a divine revelation had been overwhelmingly ample. At least some of the higher minds had seen it; and Plato sighed for a *theios logos*. Or, if man did not fully see it, yet the yearning heart of heaven could wait no longer. And, therefore, as the apostle plainly puts it,

The failures in the attempt to find out God.

The need of a divine revelation demonstrated.

"After that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness [*i.e.*, what man called foolishness] of the preaching to save them that believe."[1]

The advent of the Light of the world.

In the moral world, as in the physical, the dawn precedes the sunrise. The Sun of Righteousness came not unheralded. The first streaks of day had appeared long ago, and the reddening of the eastern sky announced the speedy advent of the "Light of the world."

[1] Archdeacon Farrar has repeatedly used the phrase,—"ethnic inspiration." We think the expression unhappy, and fear it will be misunderstood and misapplied. But the Archdeacon has lately said that Heathenism was "a vast failure," and "the light of any other religion compared with that of Christianity, but as a star to the sun."

8. The Faith of Israel.

For two thousand years, and possibly more, one race had stood apart from all others, "dwelling alone, and not reckoned among the nations." It is in the divine training of this people—and not where many vainly seek it—that we are to look for the true evolution, or development, of religion.

The true evolution of religion to be found in the training of Israel.

There are men who question the accuracy of our conceptions regarding Abraham. But even the destructive criticism, in the last resort, postulates an Abraham, or some equivalent starting-point; otherwise, Moses becomes an inexplicable phenomenon. The grandeur of the position occupied by the latter is, of course, undeniable. Kuenen has said:

Moses inexplicable without Abraham.

The grandeur of Abraham's position.

"Even from the time of Moses, Yahveh (Jehovah) comes forward with moral commandments. This is the starting point of Israel's rich religious development; the germ of those glorious truths which were to ripen in the course of centuries."

Kuenen on the commandments.

It is not too great a stress which is thus laid on the ethical character of the Mosaic faith. The Ten Commandments arose in serene imperishable majesty at least fifteen centuries before Christ. There is no parallel fact in the history of Pagan systems. "Be ye holy, for I am holy" was the sublime oracle of Israel's God, and of Israel's God alone.

No fact in the history of Pagan systems parallel to the rise of the ten commandments.

Yahveh not a mere tribal God.

Many critics assert that Yahveh was at first viewed as only a tribal god, who protected Israel, while rival deities protected other nations. That belief is based on the pure assumption that the history of Abraham, as given in Genesis, is of comparatively late origin; for the Lord is there spoken of as "Almighty," as "Judge of all the earth," and so on. But waiving the case of Abraham, and supposing we could admit that the people in Egypt, enslaved and in every way demoralized, rose no higher than to conceive of Yahveh as only *their* god; yet He was, at all events, recognized as a power above all powers—a personality—a Creator—ruling nature, never identified with it—awfully pure, yet infinitely compassionate — forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, yet punishing the impenitently wicked—a Being that abhorred all the cruel and abominable rites in which the Pagan gods were believed to delight—whose power and presence freed His people from all the superstitious terrors and the miserable magic which formed so large a part of the worship of surrounding nations. Even if the so-called higher criticism could prove that some of the conceptions now referred to were possibly inserted in the Pentateuch at a comparatively recent date, yet no one can deny that, at all events, by the eighth century before Christ, there are declarations regarding Jehovah and His

Recognized as a power above all powers, pure yet compassionate.

His people freed from superstitious terrors by His power and presence.

worship which, in truth and sublimity, have never since been surpassed. Take that passage, for example, in the prophet Micah which has extorted the admiration of Professor Huxley:

Sublime declaration concerning Jehovah and His worship in the eighth century before Christ.

"Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Not less remarkable than these lofty utterances is the declaration that Jehovah hated evil in His own people even more than in less favoured nations:

His hatred of evil in His own people.

"You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore will I punish you for your iniquities."

The gods of the nations were thorough partizans; they sided with their worshippers through right and wrong. Jehovah loved His people much, but righteousness still more. Admirable is the passionate denunciation of the hypocrisy which would divorce two things that ought ever to be linked in indissoluble wedlock—religion and morality:

His love of righteousness.

"Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances and the bag of deceitful weights, and the scant measure that is abominable?"

The vehemence and measureless scorn with which polytheism and idolatry are denounced are also most striking. In all other nations the deities

Denunciation of polytheism and idolatry.

multiplied; and image-worship rooted itself more and more deeply as time went on.

The hopefulness of the Hebrew Scriptures.

We must pause in our enumeration of the characteristics of the Hebrew Scriptures. Yet one other must still be noted—their hopefulness. When the great monarchies which walled Israel in—especially Egypt and Assyria—were trampling down the liberties of nations and spreading around them their abominable idolatries, and when, to all appearance, the cause both of God and of man was lost, the noble seers of Israel never despaired, never once desponded, in regard to the future of Israel or of the world. All things they knew were in the hands of One who was Almighty, All-wise, and All-gracious. "Be still, and know that I am God," that is, be calmly confident, and trust in Me: such was the command. One unchanging purpose—a purpose of mercy—ran throughout the ages. Let them in patience possess their souls: for in "the day of the Lord"—"the latter day"—every crooked thing was to be made straight; the Lord alone should be exalted; all iniquity was to stop her mouth; the meek should inherit the earth, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace. More and more the hopes of the nation were made to centre on an individual—"the Coming One"—"the Messiah"—"the Prince of peace;" and in Him all the families of the earth were to be blessed; He would be a light to lighten the

The Hebrew seers never desponded in regard to the future of Israel and the world.

The hopes of the nation made to centre in an individual.

Gentiles, as well as the glory of the people of Israel.

And while prophet after prophet was raised up, all moved by one Spirit, but each unfolding the message of instruction, admonition, or encouragement, or applying it to the special circumstances of his time,—and while the whole ceremonial worship was one vast prophecy of good things to come, and recognized by thoughtful men as such [1]—the providence of God was marvellously training the nation for its lofty function. Events that appeared simply evil were overruled to work out good. The captivity in Egypt—the sojourn in the wilderness—the division of the nation into two halves—the captivity in Babylon—the persecutions under Syrian kings—and the conquest of Judæa by the Romans—it is not difficult to see how each of these events was fitted to raise the mind of the people to truer conceptions of God, and teach them deeper lessons of righteousness, of sin, and of salvation.

The providential training of Israel for its lofty function.

The successive events in the history of the people fitted to elevate their conceptions of God.

Meanwhile, the wide diffusion of the Greek language, the translation into it of the Old Testament, and the contact of Greek and Jewish thought—especially in such centres as Alexandria—were very important preparations for the proclamation and reception of the Gospel over the civilized world.

The diffusion of the Greek language an important preparation.

[1] See Kurtz on the sacrificial worship of the Old Testament for proof of this.

III.

THUS, then, at the pre-appointed time—in "the fulness of the time"—dawned "the Light of Life" on men. And now—as Virgil sang, in expectation of some glorious change that was hastening on—

Virgil's expectation.

"Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo;"[1]

or in the words of Augustine:

Augustine.

"Christ appeared to the men of a worn-out dying world, that when every thing around was sinking into decay, they might, through Him, receive a new and youthful life;"

or in the far sublimer language of St. John:

St. John.

"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld His glory—the glory as of the only begotten of the Father; full of grace and truth: and as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the children of God."

The teaching of Christ.

He taught. He taught those truths to which—though often feebly and fitfully—the human reason and conscience have borne witness throughout the ages. He gave the metal without alloy: His words were pure, as "silver purified seven times." Then, the majestic verities enunciated by the prophets of Israel He explained, applied, and also developed and enlarged. He taught by words; He taught by deeds. His entire life was one continuous revelation of God and truth.

He wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds,—
In loveliness of perfect deeds
More strong than all poetic thought.

[1] Now commenceth anew the mighty roll of the ages.

He died. The good Shepherd gave His life for the sheep. That death, that Cross, that love victorious over agony, is the divinest manifestation of the Divinity. It is the full expression of the mind and heart of God; so that, when once it has taken place, HE who longs adequately to reveal Himself to His creatures, and whom to know is life eternal, can enter into ineffable repose and say, "It is enough: My creatures can know Me now." The death of Christ.

And Christ rose again—rose to the immediate presence of God. There He is exalted a Prince and a Saviour, "to give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel," and to all. The resurrection of Christ.

Such very briefly were the truths which His disciples were commanded to proclaim to all nations, "beginning at Jerusalem." But it is one thing to know the truth, and another thing to obey it. We are all familiar with the sorrowful confession of the poet Ovid: The commission of the disciples

> Video meliora proboque,
> Deteriora sequor.[1]

Moral truths were not unfrequently inculcated by heathen sages. But these sages felt and deplored the exceeding difficulty of inducing others to follow their precepts. They regarded the mass of men as hopelessly sunk in ignorance and vice, and only a small number as so happily constituted that they would ever seek to rise to the serene heights of The difficulty of the sages. Their view of the mass of mankind.

[1] I see the right, and I approve it too.
Condemn the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue.

The effect of the proclamation of the Gospel.

wisdom and virtue. But lo! a marvel. For when once the silver trump of the "glad tidings" sounded abroad, the lowest depths of society were stirred; and the grandest conceptions which the human mind can form regarding God, and the soul, and holiness, and sin, and reconciliation, and love, and heaven, and hell, now filled the minds, and moved the hearts, and shaped the lives of multitudes, who, until now, had been dead to everything but grovelling ideas and debasing lusts. A stupendous spiritual revolution; in suddenness and completeness wholly without a parallel. An entire transformation in the individual believer, and through individuals a gradual transformation of society.[1]

A stupendous and unparalleled spiritual revolution.

It was a conflict of centuries before the great systems which we have been considering gave way before the victorious march of Christianity. But successively and completely all of them did give way. All those vast forms of Pagan faith have melted away like snow in the sunbeam. Or rather say, the great thirst which the Gentile nations sought to quench by drinking of muddy and polluted streams, could now be slaked at the river, "clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb."

The disappearance of the forms of Pagan faith.

The brutish gods of Egypt have perished. We have visited the Serapeum—that vast subterranean

The gods of Egypt.

[1] *Nos ergo soli innocentes*, We alone are innocent,—was Tertullian's bold, but unanswered, challenge.—*Apol.* 45

receptacle of dead gods—and found it filled with immense granite sarcophagi, each containing the embalmed form of an ox-god, Apis.[1] Was the resurrection expected? No resurrection *for them* is possible. Baal no longer exalts himself as the rival of Jehovah. Chemosh, "the abomination of the Moabites," and bloody Moloch, are alike forgotten. In Babylon, Bel has "bowed down" and Nebo has "stooped," never to rise again; and Dagon of the Philistines has fallen once more,—and now not even the stump of him is left.

No resurrection possible for them.

Even so have passed away the deities of Greece and Rome. The Parthenon still crowns the Acropolis of Athens; but Pallas Athene, the guardian goddess, has fled; her very name is scarcely remembered there. On snowy Olympus "black-clouding Zeus" no longer holds his throne; and the god of the silver bow, Phœbus Apollo, is discarded alike at Delos and at Delphi. A Christian church stands on the spot where once arose the majestic temple of Jupiter, the guardian of the Capitol. Meantime the Roman empire has been broken in pieces; but the religion of Christ, surviving that convulsion, has converted and tamed the wild barbarians who overwhelmed the ancient world, and has given birth to a form of civilization with the continuance of which are inseparably linked the dearest hopes of humanity.

The deities of Greece.

The break up of the Roman Empire.

What the religion of Christ has done.

[1] There seem to be sixty-four of these sarcophagi

The secret of this power.

And whence this unexampled power? That problem exercises and perplexes the minds of many at this day. It was the fuller, deeper truth He taught, say some. It was His character—matchless in purity and love, say others. Yes; but there was more, much more; and we have no reason to believe, if as Mr. Matthew Arnold says, the Syrian stars look down upon a grave from which He never rose, that Christianity could have long survived His crucifixion.[1] Not the so-called omnipotence of truth, but the omnipotence of Him who is the Truth, has won the victory. As said the Apostle:

The omnipotence of Christ.

"Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, HE hath shed forth this which ye now hear and see."

The truth taught by Christ viewed by Him as salt.

Christ Himself spoke of the truth He taught as at once light and *salt*. View it for a moment under the latter aspect. Mere worldly gifts and

[1] It would be easy to adduce from many writers far removed from orthodox Christianity, strong language regarding the unequalled elevation and purity of Christ's character. Our limits restrict us to one or two quotations. Spinoza says: "The eternal wisdom has manifested itself in all things, but chiefly in the human mind, and most of all in Jesus Christ." (Æterna sapientia sese in omnibus rebus, maximè in humana mente, omnium maximè in Christo Jesu manifestavit. *Epist.* xxi.) Goethe said, "I bow before Jesus Christ as a revelation of supreme morality." Still stronger is the testimony of John Stuart Mill. Mr. John Morley indeed finds fault with Mr. Mill for his admiration, and uses depreciatory language, but without any attempt to support the charges made. Is this consistent with Mr. Morley's ideas of delicacy and justice?

graces tend lamentably to become corrupt, and to perish in their corruption. Without religion, without the religion of Christ, the human race could never raise, and never maintain, the noble fabric of a true manhood and an enduring civilization. Certainly there was much in the culture of ancient Greece that was intellectual and refined; much that was stately and seemed strong in that of ancient Rome; but the preserving element, the salt, was wanting; and either form of civilization ere long became morally corrupt, and sank in ruins. But now—whatever elements of truth or beauty—whatever pure forms of life appear in any land or age, Christianity despises them not, nay, she thankfully accepts them. She blends them with her own diviner life, so warding off corruption, and rendering these otherwise perishable treasures, "an everlasting possession." Forms of social life which ancient sages sometimes dreamt of, but despaired of realizing in a world like this, have been successfully wrought out and maintained by the Gospel; for its legitimate offspring ever is that godliness which is "profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come."

The religion of Christ essential to the elevation of the human race.

Christianity accepts and assimilates all elements of truth and beauty.

The profitableness of godliness.

We read, a short time ago, in a paper written by a well-known leader among the Comtists—Mr. Frederic Harrison—that "Christianity does not

Mr. Fred. Harrison's assertion about Christianity.

even claim to be co-extensive with human life." Either Mr. Harrison or we must have entirely misread the New Testament. To our apprehension it claims to touch human life at every point—to mould and magisterially direct every thing in individual, domestic, and public life. For it lays down principles which penetrate man all through, building up the individual anew from the very foundation of his being, and, through the individual, as we have said, reforming and regulating society. Accepted, it regenerates the man; and, so far as accepted, it regenerates the world. It reconciles man with man by reconciling man with God.

Christianity touches human life at every point.

The question of the stability of our own civilization.

In the preceding pages we have sought to state and illustrate facts—avoiding, as far as possible, mere speculation. Yet one question unavoidably suggests itself, after this long review of fallen civilizations and extinct systems of belief. What of our own civilization? is it secure? We answer, Yes, if our Christianity is secure. "Civilization in our day," said Victor Cousin, "means Christianity." If we draw inferences from the past, we must hold that were materialism, agnosticism, or even mere deism to prevail to any considerable extent, the consequences would be most serious. Morality would gradually give way. Then the *nemesis* of which we spoke above[1] would soon step in. In vain would an infidelity, calling itself

Victor Cousin on civilization.

The consequences of the prevalence of different forms of unbelief.

[1] See page 41.

scientific or philosophic, rear its proud head and try to suppress all faith;—bastard forms of belief, and low, superstitious practices would force themselves in, and infect, ere long, the *savants* themselves. *Les incredules les plus credules*,[1] said Pascal. Even already we witness, to our astonishment, the spread, to some extent, in Europe and America, of theosophy, "esoteric Buddhism," and various kindred follies—precisely as, of old, Plotinus and Porphyry had a legitimate successor in Iamblichus, and soaring philosophy was debased into magic and theurgy.

Esoteric Buddhism in Europe and America.

These things are, no doubt, humbling. Yet we do not bate a jot of heart or hope. Christianity cannot perish. Even now, while we mourn over the falling away of some, one plainly sees that, taking the human race as a whole, Christianity is steadily extending and deepening. Trial may be in store,—the forces of belief and unbelief may be ranging themselves for a final struggle; but, ere long, to Him, who now rules in the midst of His enemies, "every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess." Does there seem a tone of pride—while rebuking pride—in these words of ours? If so, we desire to put the feeling from us—remembering the words of the blessed Master: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself."[2]

Christianity spreading and deepening.

Its ultimate triumph

[1] Unbelievers are the most credulous of all.

[2] ἐμαυτόν.

The attraction of the cross.

He was first lifted up on the cross, before He was lifted up to His throne in heaven; and it is now only by the manifestation of His cross and its deep meanings that hard hearts are melted and drawn to Him with irresistible attraction; and doubtless the bright consummation of a regenerated and rejoicing world would be sooner reached, if only we, His followers, had more of the Master's spirit—ever seeking in meekness and love like His

> With winning words to conquer willing hearts
> And make persuasion do the work of fear.

Christ and His people.

The function of the Church to shine.

He who said of Himself, "I am the Light of the world," said also of His people, "Ye are the light of the world." He is the Sun. His Church is the Moon; which, in His absence, is commanded to shine, full-orbed and cloudless, on the world.

Oh, Church of the Living God! "arise, shine, for thy light is come; and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee."

APPENDIX.

ON THE RELIGIONS OF UNCIVILIZED ANCIENT NATIONS.—We have already intimated that little notice need be taken of these. Nearly everything we know about them is fitted to excite disgust and horror.

1. DRUIDISM was the faith of the Celtic (including the Cymric) races. We have notices of it in seven or eight classical writers —particularly Cæsar, Tacitus, and Pliny. A few hints may be gathered from old Gaelic and Welsh poems—such as those of Ossian and Taliessin; but their historical value is questionable.

Notices of Druidism in classical writers, etc.

The Druids, the religious leaders of the people, were of three classes. The lowest consisted of the bards; the second of those who watched natural phenomena; the highest were more properly priests. An arch-druid presided over all; who apparently wielded unbounded power.

Three classes of Druids.

There were also three classes of Druidesses. The highest formed a kind of Vestal virgins; who lived in sisterhoods and never married. These predicted coming events, cured diseases, raised storms or calmed them, and transformed themselves into whatever shape they pleased. In fact, the lingering superstitions about *witches* in Western Europe are traceable back to Druidic times.

Three classes of Druidesses.

With regard to the deities the Roman poet Lucan speaks thus:

> Here Hesus' horrid altar stands,
> Here dire Teutates human blood demands;
> Here Taranis by wretches is obeyed,
> And vies in slaughter with the Scythian maid.[1]

The oak tree, the acorn, and especially the mistletoe—a small plant that grows on the oak—were especially sacred. Worship was performed in dark groves.[2] Human sacrifices were frequent. Cæsar informs us that they made enormous figures of wicker work, and filled them with human beings, whom they burnt to death.

Sacred tree.

Human sacrifices.

[1] Rowe's Lucan, Book i.

[2] Lucan, Pharsalia, Book iii., gives a striking description of a gloomy grove near Marseilles.

Even the priestesses performed such dreadful services. Strabo speaks thus of these among the Cimbri: "The women who follow the Cimbri to war are accompanied by grey-haired prophetesses. They go with drawn swords through the camp, strike down the prisoners they meet, and drag them to a brazen caldron. There is an erection above this, on which the priestess cuts the throat of the victim, and watches how the blood flows into the vessel. Others tear open the bodies of the captives and judge from the quivering entrails as to future events."

Excommunication and its penalty.

Excommunication by the Druids was a tremendous infliction. It must have involved death or unconditional submission to the priests."

Ancient German religion morally no higher than the Celts.

2. THE RELIGION OF THE ANCIENT GERMANS.—Cæsar and Tacitus supply us with interesting information regarding this system; and the Edda of Scandinavia tells us much regarding its character at a later date. It was morally no higher than that of the Celts.

Nature-worship its foundation.

Nature-worship was its main foundation. Sun, Moon, Fire, Earth, were greatly worshipped. Woden (in the Edda, Odin) was the chief deity; he was the god of war. Thunor (Thor) was the god of thunder. He wielded, and made much use of a tremendous hammer. Lok, or Loki, was an evil being, at war with the gods; but at present a tortured prisoner. Walhalla was heaven. It was a place where the blessed warriors every day hacked each other to pieces, then got cured, and wound up the day by drinking mead—an intoxicating beverage—out of the skulls of slaughtered enemies.

Human sacrifices—especially of captives—were frequent. A King of Sweden is said to have sacrificed nine of his sons in succession, in order to prolong his own life. A kind of wild-beast ferocity marked the people: the celebrated death-song of Ragnar Lodbrok "breathes slaughter" throughout. All hopefulness seems banished from this faith. Balder, the brightest of the gods, is slain; and we are approaching the dreadful time

> When Lok shall burst his sevenfold chain,
> And night resume her ancient reign.

No account of the Slavonian faith in an old form.

3. THE RELIGION OF THE ANCIENT SLAVONIANS.—We have no satisfactory account of this faith in a very old form. The last stronghold of it was the island of Rugen, in the Baltic.

This was destroyed in 1168 by Waldemar, King of Denmark. Saxo Grammaticus, a contemporary of Waldemar's, gives a long account of the chief idol there worshipped. He describes it as a gigantic figure, with four heads and four necks—two breasts and two backs. Cattle were sacrificed to it. In sweeping the temple, the priest did not dare to breathe; and for every necessary inspiration he had to quit the temple. At the religious festivals intemperance was deemed a merit. The idol had a horse, of whose tail or mane to pull a single hair was sacrilege. It bore the god whenever he fought against his enemies, and was often found in the morning covered with sweat and mud in consequence. A standard consecrated to the god entitled those who bore it to pillage even the temples, and to commit any kind of outrage. Such is the testimony of Saxo Grammaticus.

The account of Saxo Grammaticus.

The religion of the Slavonians was evidently very childish; but it was not so ferocious as that of the Celts or the Germans.

Slavonian religion childish.

CHRIST AND CREATION:

A TWO-SIDED QUEST.

BY

REV. W. SUNDERLAND LEWIS, M.A.

Argument of the Tract.

REVELATION and observation—methods of obtaining information which are often distinct, but to be sometimes combined. This eminently the case in regard to the relation between Christ and Creation, the subject of the present inquiry.

Beginning with Creation, these two authorities are shown to concur, first, as to the universality of the reign of law amongst visible things; next, as to the general nature of the gradations marking the great ladder of being; then, as to the place of man, and so of Christ as man, at the head of that ladder; and, finally, as to the place of Christ as the head of mankind. The same authorities further agree in regarding the superiority of man to the animals as partly of a mental, but more of a moral, description; and also in regarding the primacy of the historical Christ as resting on a similar, but far profounder, foundation. He is so much the greatest, because so transcendently the best, of mankind.

Revelation speaks also of the glorified Christ. Its language on this subject tells us—amongst other things—of certain changes in the risen body of Christ as the precursors and patterns of similar future changes in many other bodies beside; though only, be it noted, where certain correlative non-bodily changes have taken place first. This is a prediction, in effect, of the future appearance on earth of a new pattern of life. Such a prediction not only already verified in part by the experience of many; but also, at least, illustrated in measure by the researches of Science; and that, both in its general character, and its more important details, as specified here at some length.

The result, so far, is the establishment of a numerous and weighty succession of correspondences between Scripture and Science, and the consequent demonstration of the main points on which these correspondences turn. In other words, Christ is the Crown of the past, and the Key of the future. So far, our two oracles are at one.

This conclusion leads to further inquiry. If Christ be so much, is He not very much more? The suggestions of observation and the teaching of Revelation combine to show that He is. He is the Creator of all.

Hence, therefore, at last, the peculiar complexity, intimacy, and profoundity, of the relation of Christ to Creation. He is at once the Fellow-creature and the Creator of all that is made; the Keystone, as it were, of the whole arch of existence. Hence, also, the miserable inadequacy of all Non-Christian views of the cosmos. The best of them teaches men more error than truth.

A brief corroborative reflection is added. What Science says respecting "degradation" in general is compared with what Scripture says on the degradation, condemnation, and redemption of man. The harmony of this with our previous conclusions leads to the conclusion of all. The secret of Creation lies in the Person of Christ! The secret of Redemption lies in His Cross! "In HIM are hid ALL the treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge."

CHRIST AND CREATION:

A TWO-SIDED QUEST.

I.

Introductory.

REVELATION and observation are methods of ascertaining truth which are concerned chiefly with different fields of inquiry. The one tells us about the unseen; the other searches among the seen. For all this, however, it is not always practicable to keep their operations apart. The explorations of the latter amongst the things that are seen sometimes bring us so close to the shores of the unseen as at least to suggest a good deal. In the same way, the instructions of the former about the unseen sometimes tell us not a little respecting the things that are seen.

Revelation and observation different methods of ascertaining truth.

It seems to follow, therefore, that there are lines of inquiry in which we are more than warranted in seeking to avail ourselves of both these sources of light. Where the topic under discussion is one

Lines of inquiry in which both may be used

on which they both offer to enlighten us, why should either be slighted? We are hardly likely, in that case, even with the assistance of both of them, to have more light than enough.

What is the relation between Christ and Creation?

It is on this principle accordingly that we desire to act in our present inquiry. Is there any relation between Christ and Creation? Between the Jesus of Scripture and the Cosmos of Science? And if so, of what kind is it? and how far does it reach? It is evident, we think, that these inquiries are of the two-sided sort we have named; and are manifestly such as take us within the domains both of Scripture and Science – both of knowledge and faith. With regard to most of these inquiries, also, it seems equally evident that the utterances of both these authorities respecting them are deserving of attention and thought.

This inquiry a case in point.

Some interpretations of Scripture and conclusions of Science are generally accepted.

Notwithstanding much that is still uncertain, *e.g.*, in our interpretations of Scripture, there are some explanations of it which are almost unanimously regarded as not admitting of doubt. So, also, notwithstanding the large proportion at present of what is merely conjectural amongst the inferences of science, there are some of its deductions which are unanimously regarded as almost beyond the reach of dispute. The most important and apparently relevant of these generally-accepted conclusions on both sides, are what we now seek to combine. Accepting them all—for the moment

These now to be combined.

at any rate—as being correct in the main, we would endeavour to see to what extent they appear to throw light on the subject of inquiry. The special interest of such an endeavour is evident from the first. Its full importance, if we mistake not, will come out at the end.

The interest and importance of so doing.

II.

Christ the Crown of the Past.

We may fitly begin our inquiry with that portion of our subject which lies the nearest to ourselves. Unquestionably, as human beings, we are part and parcel of that visible universe which is the special field of the researches of science. We would ask first of all, therefore, what those researches tell us about its constitution and nature; and especially what they describe as the leading feature of all that we see. That word "cosmos" already referred to, shall help us to answer. By that well-known term science gives emphatic utterance to one of her most prominent views. The visible universe is a "cosmos," according to her, because of the extraordinary perfection of "order" and "beauty" which the observation of man has learned to discern in it throughout. So Pythagoras is believed to have taught, ages ago, by coining that term. So every step in true knowledge since his time is believed to illustrate and confirm. Be-

Human beings part of the visible universe. What Science tells us of the universe.

The universe a "cosmos."

The teaching of Pythagoras confirmed by Science

Science teaches that the universe is conspicuous for its exhibition of law.

fore all things science teaches us that the universe is conspicuous for its exhibition of law. Everything exists — everything changes — according to rule.

Revelation expresses the same thought.

Does the teaching of Revelation say anything, and if so, to what effect on this subject? The method proposed by us requires us to consider this next. A very brief reference appears sufficient to settle the point. The first page of the Bible shows that the language of Revelation expresses the same thought; expresses it identically, only—as some think—in a more logical way. It speaks of a Ruler, that is to say, as well as a rule. It recognizes a Lawgiver as well as a law. And it invites our first and chief attention, therefore, rather to Him than to it. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." None the less, however, but rather all the more, does the exceedingly concise account of the visible universe which follows that opening sentence of our Bibles, recognize the perpetual presence of law. The idea of "order" is woven into it from beginning to end. If you destroy its order you destroy itself, whether in whole or in part. What special order, what studied order, there is in its times! What equal order, what conspicuous order, in the array of its facts! How careful its description of all the life it mentions as being "after its kind." What explicit mention also, in other parts—as in describing

The account of the visible universe at the beginning of Genesis recognizes the presence of law.

the functions of the sun and moon, for example—of the imposition of rule! Is not the absolutely orderly constitution of all things, in a word, the special conclusion to which it points us itself? More than once the chapter pauses to speak of that described by it as "good." At the end of all it speaks of all described by it as being more still. "God saw everything that He had made; and behold, it was very good." The meaning of this—at any rate, in part—is easy to see. That is "good" in moral matters, according to Scripture, which is in compliance with rule. Righteousness is the observance, sin the transgression of law. In other than moral matters, therefore, such as these which are here, a thing will be "good" in this same kind of language when it answers its end; in other words, when it is in accordance with rule. By parity of reasoning, consequently, it will be "very good" when it answers its purpose to the full; when its accordance with rule is without a flaw. Except in depth, therefore, wherein does this statement of Scripture differ from that fundamental deduction of science to which we adverted just now? What is the *discovery* of the one but the *announcement* of the other—so far as it goes?

The orderly constitution of all things the conclusion specially pointed to.

God's declaration concerning everything that He had made.

It was "very good" because it answered its purpose to the full.

The discovery of science is the announcement of revelation.

After the fact of this universal order comes the thought of its manner. We will examine this first, as in the previous instance, from the side of human research. In that visible universe of which we

The lowest condition of matter known to human research.

The world of inorganic existence.

The elementary forces supplemented by higher ones.

are speaking, human research knows of nothing lower than that condition of matter in which it is believed that its so-called ultimate atoms are acted on by elementary forces alone. To this category belongs the whole world of inorganic existence. Immediately above it comes another condition, in which these elementary forces have been supplemented by others of a higher description. To this category may be assigned all those vastly varied lower forms of organization and life which constitute the vegetable kingdom, as it is called. In the category next above this—a category in which both the previously-named groups of forces have been supplemented in turn by a third group of a still higher description—that higher world of distinctly sentient existence which is comprised in the so-called animal kingdom, is to be found. Lastly, by the addition of other energies yet to the whole previously-existing aggregation of forces, we come to a higher world still, the world, viz., of distinctly rational or intellectual existence. Ordinary observation cannot be said to know anything which is higher than this.

The vegetable kingdom.

A third and higher group—the animal kingdom.

A higher still—the world of rational existence.

Notwithstanding the fact that a greater or less degree of uncertainty may be thought to attach, by some persons, to some of its gradations, the above may be accepted as a general view of the successive steps in the great ladder of existence so far as known to our senses. It may be doubted, in-

deed, whether it is possible at present to offer very much more; and whether any inquirer is yet competent to give a description of the gradations in question, which shall be otherwise than uncertain in some of its limits, or more than approximate in any? But this does not affect, in any vital manner, the question before us. All that is asserted here is, that there is a principle pervading them of the kind we have named. The second step of this ascent is not arrived at, that is to say, by thrusting the lowest away, but by building upon it. The third step is built, in like manner, on both the second and first. And the highest of all, therefore, is built in like manner again on all the others below. Nothing is subtracted, in short, but much is added all the way up.

One principle pervades all the steps of the ladder of existence.

It is important to notice what follows from this as to the nature of man. He stands, admittedly, at the very summit of this ladder of being. It follows, therefore, this being its character, that his nature is as thoroughly elementary, on the one hand, as it is thus pre-eminent on the other. He is as certainly animal, that is to say, as though he were not human as well. In some respects, again, he is as much the creature of instinct, as though he were not, at the same time, under the guidance of reason as well. And he is as certainly composed and built up of such elementary substances as carbon and nitrogen and

The two-fold aspect of the nature of man as at the summit of this ladder.

phosphorus, and so on, as though he were not also possessed of those highly distinguishing mental powers which no man at present can produce by their means. Of the same materials, in a word, as all that he sees, he is yet above it throughout—a highly-elaborated pillar of clay on a pedestal of the same.

Faith's description of man.

Faith's description of the nature of man, and of the world he belongs to, though not identical with this description, is not at variance with it. In many important respects, we may rather say that it is tantamount to it throughout. On the one hand, *e.g.*, it describes man as standing at the summit of a practically identical ladder of being. First below him, as in the previous description, it shows us "the cattle, and creeping things, and fish of the sea, and fowl of the air." Next below them, as in the previous case too, it shows us the "grass" and the "herbs" and the "trees of the field." And below these again, as in the previous case still, those severed "lands" and gathered "waters" upon, or in, or out of the elements composing which all this manifold and multitudinous life is described as being produced. On the other hand, though placed thus at the summit of all, man is not described here, any more than before, as being divided from any. On the contrary, it is said expressly that "he also is flesh." And it is also said, just as expressly—and that, apparently

His pre-eminence.

The first order below him—the cattle, etc.

Then the grass, etc.

Then the "severed lands" and "gathered waters."

Man not divided from any

"Grass" and "flesh."

with something more than a reference to the mere perishability of his nature—that "all flesh is grass." And of man himself, therefore, as of everything under him, that he is of "the dust of the earth."

Man of "the dust of the ground.'

This conclusion marks a definite step in the progress of our inquiry. The wildest unbelief acknowledges fully the true manhood of Christ. And faith, of course, while affirming still more, affirms as much as this too. According, therefore, to both these ways of regarding the question, the relation of Christ to creation—at any rate in the first instance—is the relation of man to the same. In other words, the historical Christ was at once superior, and yet akin to all the things that we see.

The true manhood of Christ acknowledged by unbelief

The historical Christ at once superior and akin to all that we see.

It is with human beings, however, as we see it to be with the clouds in the atmosphere of this earth. Though all are necessarily above that from which, nevertheless, they have all been drawn up; they are not all above it, by any means, at the very same height. We see the direction, therefore, in which we must inquire next concerning the true position of Christ. What was that position in reference to those of the rest of mankind?

His position in relation to the rest of mankind.

The question does not really admit of more answers than one. In this respect also Christ was admittedly at the summit of all. As a matter of fact, even unbelief virtually acknowledges this. At

Christ admittedly at the summit of all.

The name of Christ and the place of Christian civilisation.

the present moment it is certain that the name of Christ is the most influential name upon earth. Christian civilisation, at the present moment, is the highest we know. What is it, in effect, but the successor of others which held similar rank in their day? At one time the civilisation of Rome, such as it was, had conquered the world by its arms. Every one knows how the civilisation of Greece, by its culture, subdued this in its turn. The civilisation of Christianity, which is the civilisation of Christ, has long overcome both. How significant the fact that we have the Gospel message in the language of Greece; and that the most illustrious of tongues found its highest function in telling the world about Christ!

In the eye of faith Christ the highest of men.

To the same effect, on this point also, does our other authority speak. It is simply notorious, in fact, that to the eye of faith, Christ is the highest of men. In the language of faith, to be a "Christ" or an "Anointed One" at all, is to be one set apart for great use. To be "the Christ," therefore,—to be *the* Anointed One—is to be the most distinguished among such. It is to stand amongst them as they stand amongst the rest of mankind. Consequently, it is to be adorned with a crown which it were flat treason even to offer elsewhere.

This brings us, of course, to a second definite step in discussing the relation of the historical

Christ to the things that are seen. He stands at the head of those beings who stand at the head of them all.

Wherein the manhood of Christ excels all else that is human.

On this point, however, a further question requires to be asked. When we speak of the manhood of the historical Christ as being confessedly the highest of all, in what precise sense is this true? Wherein had that manhood its chief advantage over all else that was human? In almost every crown there is some individual jewel which shines brightest of all. Was there such a jewel, and, if so, what was its nature, in this particular crown?

The intellectual faculties in relation to the place of man in creation.

The inquiry necessitates a further view of the complex nature of man. In all that we have hitherto said of him here, we have tacitly assumed that his intellectual faculties have most to do with securing him the eminent place which he holds. And it cannot be denied that they are of real moment in regard to this point. Without undertaking to dispute the existence of anything similar to these faculties in some apparently exceptional races or members of the purely animal world, it cannot be denied that he is very widely differentiated in this respect even from these. The well-known fact that any marked approach to those mental processes which we reckon on in him, astonishes us in them, seems to prove this of itself. It may be doubted, however, for all this, whether we have the key of the case in this fact; and whether the

The difference between man and the highest members of the purely animal world.

The crowning advantage of man lies in his moral rather than his intellectual endowments.

crowning advantage of man over the brutes does not lie rather in his moral, than in his intellectual endowments. Here again it is no doubt true of some among these—more especially so, perhaps, of those species amongst them which are brought much into contact with men—that they do sometimes seem to evince something like a sense of duty or right. At any rate, where they have distinctly disobeyed the commands of those to whom they look up as their masters or owners, they do sometimes show undoubted signs, if not of shame, yet of fear. But this cannot be put on a par for a moment with that sense of right and wrong in the abstract, and that inward approbation of the one and disapprobation of the other, of which human nature seems to be always capable, even when found at its worst. Why else is it that men sometimes find themselves blushing in solitude at their secret misdeeds? Why else is it, also, that they sometimes even find a relief in making these known? If that inward disquiet which prompts them to this were merely a kind of reflection—as some affirm that it is—of the disapprobation and ill-usage which such offenders fear from others, supposing those others to know of their secrets, surely, instead of urging them to make those things known, this would be just the feeling to prevent them from doing anything of the kind. Certainly it would never lead a man guilty of mur-

Signs of shame and fear in animals.

The sense of right and wrong in the abstract peculiar to man.

Explains the sense of shame men feel in secret.

Prompts the open confession.

der, for example, to give himself up spontaneously to certain ignominy and death—as has happened frequently before now. Clearly the principle that does this must be something apart from other men's thoughts. Clearly, also, the principle that does this must be something essential to the normal nature of man. Individuals who appear to be almost wholly deficient in this respect, may be discoverable here and there, it is true. But this is no more wonderful in its way than the occasional occurrence amongst us of individuals who are wholly unable to distinguish discords from concords, or bright objects from dark. Deafness and blindness are not to be regarded, on that account, as the normal condition of men.

The moral sense essential to the nature of man.

Cases of men destitute of moral sense abnormal.

It is easy to see also, on the other hand, how intrinsically superior to everything else within man is this essential part of his nature. It is superior, first, in its strength. We test the strength of a force by its conquests. What can it overcome at its best? In the cases just referred to, we see what this principle of conscience can overcome at its best, viz., the fear of ignominy and death. It is hard to name anything, indeed, which this same principle has not overcome in its time. It is impossible, therefore, to name anything within man which is stronger than this in its way! This principle is superior also, in the next place, in regard to its rank. Even in that depth of remorse

The superiority of the moral sense to everything else in man.

The supreme power of this principle.

Something in remorse not to be treated with scorn.

just now adverted to, we all feel that there is something working which ought not to be treated with scorn. The wretch who feels it, however otherwise degraded, is higher than the wretch who does not.

How much its absence means.

Do we not all feel also, on the other side of the case, that the less a man is capable of this inward compunction for evil, the nearer he is to the brute? As also that the more he is restrained by the positive side of the same principle from the commission of evil, the more eminent is his worth? After all, what we most profoundly *admire* in a man lies in this direction alone. It is not his talents, not his endowments, not his powers, not his attainments, but his character that we *respect!* The more CONSCIENTIOUS, the more of a MAN!

How much its perfection implies.

A further necessary distinction.

One other thing also, in regard to this point, must not be passed by. This "conscientiousness" is not quite so simple a thing as it looks. It is a "function" rather "of two variables," as the mathematicians express it. Not only, that is to say, are there differences of sensitiveness among men with regard to the attainment of right; there are also among them equal differences of opinion as to the nature of right. Practically, also, these differences are found to tell very much on each other. A man's knowledge of right, *e.g.*, is sometimes very imperfect because, with his weak sensitiveness on the subject of evil, he has

The imperfection of a man's knowledge of right often due to his weak sensitiveness to evil.

never wished it, in reality, to be very much more. He has loved darkness rather than light. So, on the other hand, the comparative imperfection of a man's knowledge of right, not infrequently has the effect of causing his desire for it to be weak. He loses the power of *sight*, as it were, for the want of *light*, as with certain creatures in caves. Probably of the far larger majority of mankind we should not be very wrong in saying that they have suffered somewhat—if not suffered greatly—in both these respects. Their sensitiveness as to right has been impaired because their standard of right has been low. On the other hand, their standard of right has been lowered because their sensitiveness about it has been weak. And thus in both ways, therefore, there has been a sore diminution in their moral superiority to the brutes. Sometimes, in fact, that superiority will be found to have shrivelled into little more than a certain capacity for being ashamed—a relic which serves principally to give evidence of what ought to have been!

Imperfect knowledge often causes his desire for right to be weak.

Lamentable diminution thus caused sometimes in man's moral superiority to the brutes.

These considerations may enable us now to give a sufficient answer to the question previously asked. The great superiority of the historical Christ to the rest of mankind lies in the lines we have traced. Where all other men fail in some measure, where most other men fail egregiously, He succeeded entirely. In other words, with neither of the disadvantages, He had both the advantages—

The superiority of the historical Christ to the rest of mankind moral.

The key to Christ's superiority lies in the absolute perfection of His teaching and example.

and that to perfection—of which we have spoken. Never was anything purer than His teaching, unless it were His example. This was *the* jewel which made His diadem the solitary thing that it was. He was so specially the highest, because, in every way, He was so far the best of mankind. Even those who are not prepared to admit all that is claimed for the Jesus of history by His Church, admit this to be true. This is evident from the tone taken by them in attempting to account otherwise for His fame. It is felt now to be a kind of forlorn hope to try and blacken His name. No hypothesis can now expect to be listened to, to any serious extent, which starts with the assumption of evil in Him. Such is the verdict of nearly twenty centuries of hostile observation and thought. What the experience of the world has never claimed for any other it admits about Him. He was the best of His race.

The attempt to blacken His name felt to be hopeless.

Christ the best of His race.

How Revelation at once transcends and confirms this conclusion.

Revelation, of course, in proclaiming Christ to be the Man "without sin" goes beyond this a great deal; and in so doing, of course, confirms it also in the strongest possible way. According to both witnesses, therefore, we are brought to the same conclusion respecting the ethical position of Christ. Incontestably He held the moral primacy among the children of man.

III.

Christ the Key of the Future.

Hitherto, in considering the relation of Christ to Creation, we have purposely taken only a partial view of the case. We have only contemplated Him as He existed on earth before His death on the cross. Of the nature of Christ as it existed in those subsequent days of which the Scriptures also inform us, we have refrained from speaking as yet. But it is evident, of course, that we must do so no longer if we would take a complete view of our subject. Revelation also speaks to us—and that not less copiously—of a glorified Christ. And it is saying the least, therefore, to say of this latter part of His story that it must not be left out.

Christ after "the days of His flesh."

The glorified Christ.

In discussing this, it will be best, on many accounts, to begin with the Scriptural side. What do those Scriptures which assure us of the rising again of Christ from the dead, and of His subsequent manifestation "by many infallible proofs" to those who had best known Him before, tell us besides on this point? What do they tell us, especially—for this has most to do at this juncture with our present inquiry—about that bodily nature in which He appeared at that time?

The testimony of Scripture.

The answer is plain enough in some respects, if

The post-resurrection body of Christ.

somewhat mysterious in others. After the rising again of Jesus of Nazareth, the Scriptures ascribe a body to Him which was in several ways "higher" than that in which He had previously died. It was a body "higher," in the first place, in fashion or look. That singular mixture of hesitation and adoration which is described as marking the behaviour of those intimate friends of Christ, to whom He is said to have showed Himself after His passion (see Matt. xxviii. 17; John xxi. 12), suffices to prove this of itself. Evidently now, they see something other—evidently now, they see something higher—than aught which they had previously seen. That risen body is also described in Scripture as having become something "higher" in character than what it previously was. The well-known fact that the Christ who had previously died is now described as having become the Christ who never can die again (Rom. vi. 9), suffices to prove this of itself. All the difference, in fact, between immortal and mortal is implied in such words. At the same time these changes in the appearance and character of the body of Christ are never represented to us as being of such a nature as to sever its connection with that which existed before. After all, that new body is not *so* new as to have lost identity with the old. "Handle Me, and see that it is I Myself."

Its appearance.

The effect on His followers.

Its character.

No longer subject to death.

That new body not another.

This, however, is by no means all that is declared to us on this point. Revelation, on the contrary, always describes this mysterious change in the body of Christ as at once the precursor and the pattern of many others beside. History is, in this matter, to follow its custom of repeating itself. In other words, either along the same path as that which was travelled by Christ, or else along a shorter path still, changes similar to those which passed on the body of Christ at His resurrection, are to pass hereafter on many other bodies as well. This is taught us plainly, on the one hand, in general terms: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." This is taught us, on the other, with no less plainness, as to the main details of the change. As in the previous case of Christ Himself, *e.g.*, there is to be a change in *look*, to begin. A change in look which shall have the effect of making the bodies affected by it similar in appearance to that of Christ Himself (see Phil. iii. 21; 1 John iii. 2). Also, as in the previous case again, there shall be a change, after the pattern of Christ, in character too—that which is now mortal or subject to death in the subjects of this change, becoming victor over it then (1 Cor. xv. 53, 54). And yet, finally, as in the previous case still, the change effected shall not be such as to involve loss of identity with that which existed before. This

The same change to take place in other bodies.

This taught in general terms.

Details of the change.

Appearance

Character.

No destruction of identity.

"mortal" is to "*put on*" immortality; this "corruptible" is to *put on* "incorruption;" they are not to be obliterated thereby. So far, in fact, will the change in question be from effecting destruction, that it will deliver from it for ever.

The change eternal deliverance from destruction.

One other feature requires to be noted in what Scripture says to us on this point. We are not taught to look for these great external changes in every man's case. Only, in fact, where certain similar internal changes have taken place first, are we to expect these outer ones to ensue. The language of Revelation is notably consistent, as well as peculiarly deep on this point. We have already noticed that, even in man at his worst, there exists a certain slumbering and unenlightened capacity for distinguishing moral evil and good; a capacity which is supposed by some to be sealed (see Prov. xx. 27, Eph. v. 14), in his pneuma or spirit. But, except for this, the Bible describes man as he is as a wholly "psychical" being. He has a merely "psychical" or "natural" mind, in a merely "natural" body. In both respects, however, he is described to us as being susceptible of amendment. On the one hand, he is so, in regard to his "mind." When that "mind" or "spirit" is touched effectually by the power of the Spirit of God, Scripture describes it as becoming "quickened" or "created anew," with such consequent powers of appreciation and

Every man not to be changed.

An inward change must be first experienced.

The teaching of Scripture on the subject.

The change a quickening or "new creation."

will and performance in regard to spiritual matters as it never previously knew. Not unreasonably, therefore, when the spring of a man's nature has been "spiritualised" thus (if so we may speak), is such a one spoken of in Scripture as having become a "spiritual" man. Not unreasonably, also, in such a case, is that other and outward branch of amendment spoken of as sure to ensue. Nor is it unreasonable lastly, when that is so, that the new outward nature thus brought into being should be described to us by a similar name. Such, at any rate, is the case. "It is sown a [psychical or] natural body; it is raised a *spiritual* body." In that fact, so the apostle teaches us, we have the essence of all. In that fact we can see, also, that we are in the presence of the consummation of all. Even if it be not in our power—whilst still this side of so momentous a change—to discern all that is meant by the singular and striking term here employed to describe it, we can at least perceive the beauty and admire the harmony of the idea. Such a favoured tenant in so glorious a dwelling—such a "spiritual" mind in such a correspondingly "spiritual" body—such a likeness to Christ in inward faculties and in outward expression as well—make up together a completeness of symmetry which lacks nothing even in thought.

The quickened becomes "a spiritual man."

The changed body becomes "a spiritual body."

The ideal perfection of this two-fold likeness to Christ.

Thus much, in a general way, of the Scriptural

The same subject from the side of human research.

view. We have to ask next, whether anything can be learned about this branch of our subject from the opposite side. Do any of the accredited results of human research bear upon it at all? And, if so, in what manner? And to how great an extent?

The first of these questions is not to be answered at once in a negative way. So far, on the contrary as concerns one particular field of human experience, the very reverse appears to be true.

Many have already experienced the inward change.

There are multitudes of men, at any rate—themselves the successors of similar men in the past—who deliberately declare themselves to be already the subjects of one part of this change. They know themselves now to be other than they were at one time—so they distinctly assure us—in the things of the spirit. They find themselves moved by desires, they find themselves in the enjoyment of faculties, they find themselves conscious of powers of which they knew nothing before.

To despise their testimony is to despise a great fact.

Such testimony is a fact which no one who deals with facts can afford to despise. In all other subjects of inquiry a greater degree of evidential weight is attached to the testimony of experts—be they many or few—than to all the random guesses of all the inexperience of all the rest of the world. We are at a loss to know why we should not do the same in this subject as well.

Even apart from such testimony, however, there

are many positive facts which at least seem deserving of attention in regard to this point. What the various Scriptural statements just quoted really amount to, when all taken together, is a deliberate prediction of the future appearance amongst us of a new pattern of life. When all that of which they assure us shall be fully accomplished, there will be a new description of man—a new variety of being—on the face of this earth. Is this at all at variance, is it not rather in exact accordance (so far as it goes), with some of the most honoured deductions of scientific inquiry regarding the past of this earth? According to these deductions, there has been a long succession of similar manifestations—manifestations similar in their novelty, if not in anything else—on the face of our earth. We are told that its crust, in fact, for furlongs downwards, is a vast repertory of the remains of such beings; and that the whole number of living forms which have first appeared, and then disappeared, in the days of the past, is considerably greater than the whole number in existence at present. Viewed in this general way, the Scriptural announcement which we are considering only adds another term to this almost immeasurable series of being; and simply declares that that shall be in the future which has been in the past. The inferences of science almost prophesy—the same thing.

Other facts deserving of attention.

The Scriptures referred to, a virtual prediction of a new pattern of life.

The deductions of science on this point in accordance with Scripture.

The Scriptural announcement only adds another term to an almost immeasurable series of being.

Parallelisms illustrating Scriptural statements.

Also, if we turn from this general view of these Scriptural statements to the consideration of some of their more important details, we shall find parallelisms, we believe, which, if not strict analogies, are illustrations in point. One such occurs, for example, in connection with the question of order. So far as men have hitherto traced the succession of existence in the days that are past, they believe themselves to have established a remarkable general rule in regard to this point. In the same line of existence, the lower form, though not the less perfect, has always preceded the higher. That being so, is it not at least worthy of notice, that in the predicted genesis of the "new man" also, this is to be emphatically the rule? "Howbeit, that is not *first* which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and *afterwards* that which is spiritual."

In the order of existence the lower precedes the higher.

In the predicted genesis of the new man the natural precedes the spiritual.

We find another illustration, in the next place, on the question of mode. When endeavouring at first to take a general view of the great ladder of being so far as ordinarily known to our senses, we saw that the one principle pervading all its changes was the simple principle of addition. Nothing was subtracted, much was added, all the way up. That being so, it is surely a fact to be marked that an apparent illustration of the same principle is to be found in the teaching of Scripture concerning the nature of that higher life which she bids us

The principle of addition as referred to before.

The same principle found in Scripture teaching concerning the predicted higher life on earth.

expect on this earth. In what way, according to her, is that highest visible life of the future to differ from the highest existing at present? As that does in turn from the kind of life immediately below it, and as every lower kind also does in turn from that immediately below it, viz., in the way of addition alone. This is true, on the one hand, of the inner faculties of this new species of man. "These be they," it is written of some (see Jude 19, R.V., margin), "who separate themselves, natural, not having the Spirit." In other words, it is this *addition* of "having the Spirit," which differentiates the "spiritual" from the "natural" so far as the inner man is concerned. Much the same also is true, on the other hand, of the outward framework as well. When the apostle in 2 Cor. v. 1–4, speaks of this body of the future under the figure of a dwelling, and declares for himself how greatly he longs to enter on the possession thereof, he is careful to show us that he looks for it only in the way we have named. "Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon;"—so it is that he writes (2 Cor. v. 4).

The highest life of the future differs from the highest life of the present in the way of addition alone.

The principle of addition in relation to the future body.

We may extend our comparison also to the nature of the addition to which this differentiation is due. We have seen that the principal inward advantages of man as he is over the best of the animals below him, lie in the direction of his vastly superior power of reasoning, and of appreci-

The nature of the addition to which the differentiation is due.

ating the "right." If these things exist at all in the members of the merely animal world, it is in a rudimentary form at the best. It is the comparative perfection of these faculties in man which lifts him up so far above them. Just so is it, also, according to the teaching of Scripture, of those inward advantages which make the "new man" superior to the "old." These also are said to depend on a difference of a precisely similar kind. As we have seen, it is by the enlightening of the dark, by the awakening of the dormant, by the quickening of that which was lifeless before, that the spiritual mind supplants the natural, and becomes able to "understand the things of the Spirit." *There* is the difference which gives the "new man" of Scripture his great present advantage over the old. In both cases, in short—the case of the natural man compared with the animals, and the case of the spiritual man compared with the natural—the interval between the higher and lower is described as of transcendent magnitude and significance, and yet is not an abyss.

The inward advantages which make the "new man" superior to the "old."

The spiritual and the natural mind.

The interval between them.

Whether we are taught as much as this with regard to man's outward framework as well, is not so easy to see; but we are clearly taught that which is not out of keeping with such an idea. The body of man, as men are now, is said to possess one conspicuous advantage over all merely animal

bodies now in existence, in its greatly superior power of adaptation to external influences of all sorts. The human body can not only sustain life, when exposed to changes which are simply destructive to others, but even enjoy it too in a measure. If we suppose this adaptability increased to such a degree—and there are reasons for believing this not to be so very difficult a thing to accomplish—as to make the body of man superior to all the external influences to which it will ever be exposed, it is clear that in that case his body would be possessed of a practical immortality such as that of which we are told. Nor would such a transformation be so wholly unexampled in magnitude as might appear at first sight. The original transition, *e.g.*, from inanimate to animate existence, does not appear, to our minds, to be very much less. Of the two things, indeed, there seems a distinctly greater change in causing life to begin than in causing it to advance. On this part of the subject, therefore, if our two authorities do not exactly appear to harmonize, they are not at variance, at the worst. A point this, in the circumstances surrounding them, not unworthy of note.

The advantage of the human body over other animal bodies.

What the human body might be made.

The transformation not wholly unexampled.

To cause life to begin greater than to cause it to advance.

We come next to the more debateable question of the origin of new types. No doubt on this point the really established conclusions of science

The origin of new types.

New types seem sometimes to appear.

have not much to say to us yet. In the field of nature, as it lies before us at present, we do sometimes discover, it is true, what look like examples of the new appearance of types. But we cannot at present speak positively as to the ultimate permanence of those forms. Some such, on the contrary, as a matter of fact, have already ceased to exist. The "gourd" which was found to appear in the one night, disappeared in the next. Still, it is a fact to be dealt with, that certain new "varieties" of formation—so called in order to distinguish them from those forms of more assured character and stability, to which the name of "species" is given—do now occasionally make their appearance (sometimes with, and sometimes without the interference of man) on the great arena of life. And it is also a fact which has to be dealt with, that a large majority of the "varieties" in question have been found by observation to take their origin, not from many centres, but one. The "copper beech" of our ornamental plantations is a familiar, and, therefore, a suitable instance in point. This peculiar description of beech a few years ago was wholly unknown in the world. It now exists as a distinct "variety" in all parts of the land. It is also a "variety," the exact dispersion and origin of which —to a certain extent—can be easily traced; the individual specimen, it is said, being still in existence, which first of all, as it were, gave the start

Their ultimate permanence uncertain.

New "varieties" do appear.

They take their origin from one centre.

The "copper beech" a familiar example.

to the fashion in question. And, *be that as it may*, there is no manner of doubt that the records of horticulture and of domesticated animal life, abound with instances of a similar kind. Nothing is more common, in fact, than for what are known as "varieties" to originate in this manner. Whatever their destiny may be, this is how they began. The diversity which one specimen originated, other connected specimens afterwards followed. Thus the group started; thus it has grown.

Similar instances abound in the records of horticulture and animal life.

Is there anything similar in regard to that new race or "group" in the life-history of mankind, of which we are told in the Scripture? That there are many points of strong dissimilarity in regard to this case, is visible of course at a glance. But this does not in any way militate against the possibility of likeness in it in other respects. As a matter of fact, indeed, so far as that unicentral mode of appearance is concerned to which alone we are now referring, no degree of resemblance could very well be more express and complete. Consider, *e.g.*, how distinctly this case of new nature, in both departments, is described as originating with One. Also, how distinctly we are told of all those persons who now possess it in part, and are hereafter to possess it in full, that all this is only in consequence of their connection with, and also after the pattern of One! There are few things, in fact, of which revelation tells us with

The new "group" in the history of mankind.

The unicentral mode of appearance

Scriptural descriptions of the inward transformation and of the future outward change.

greater plainness of speech. To be practical "imitators of Christ," on the one hand, to have the "mind which was in Christ Jesus," to be "conformed" to Him in spirit and feeling, these are its descriptions of that inward transformation which changes the "old man" to the "new." On the other hand, to "bear the image of the heavenly" One in outward frame and appearance as well, and to have these "bodies of humiliation conformed unto the likeness of His body of glory," when we "see Him" at last "as He is," is the description it gives of the other and future part of the change.

The new "group" made up of those who have undergone the double change.

Add to which, as it is only of those thus doubly changed, on the one hand, so is it expressly of *all* of such, on the other hand, that this new race is made up. So far, therefore, as concerns that one point on which alone we are dwelling, what we are taught to believe of this race is what we have seen illustrated also amongst "the trees of the field," viz., the many springing from one! No sensible person will despise this comparison because of the vast interval it embraces. The whole experience of science rather teaches us to do the reverse. The simpler the nature of a principle, and the wider its grasp, the stronger—so far—the probability of its truth.

The many spring from the one.

> "The very law which moulds a tear,
> And bids it trickle from its source,
> That law preserves the earth a sphere,
> And guides the planets in their course.

Another thing, also, in this illustration, deserves to be weighed. The whole existing Adamic race is traced in the Bible to an origin of this kind. "Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image." Succeeding "Adams" (so to call them) by doing the same have made the race what it is. Such, in brief, in regard to this matter, is the Scriptural story. Its special importance in our present inquiry lies in the fact of its being employed by the Bible itself in illustration of the genesis of the new race of mankind. This is done indirectly—amongst other things—when Christ, as the Head of this higher and later race, is called the "last Adam" or "second Man." This is done directly, when it is said of those who are destined to belong to that race, that, as they have "borne the image of the earthy," *i.e.*, of Adam, so they are to bear "the image of the heavenly," *i.e.*, of Christ. A certain amount of resemblance, in fact, seems to be predicated in the Bible respecting the very processes employed in bringing these issues about. The great general scientific principle of "like begets like,"—the same principle which is recognized in the language of Scripture when it describes all living existence as being "after its kind"—is described as lying at the foundation of both. In other words, as it is by "generation" that all natural men inherit the image of the "first," so it is by "regeneration" both of spirit

The origin of the Adamic race.

Christ the "last Adam" or the "second Man."

The new "group" who bore "the image of the earthy" are to bear the "image of the heavenly."

The scientific principle of "like begetting like" the foundation of both.

The "image of the earthy" comes by generation, the "image of the heavenly" by regeneration

and body that all spiritual men are to bear finally that of the "second." This is not a parallelism—it may be—to be pressed very far. But it is still less to be slighted. For on the one hand, to a certain extent, it compares the genesis of the "new man" with that of the old. On the other hand, it compares the genesis of the natural man with that of "the trees of the field." In a certain way, therefore, it at least seems to bridge over that vast interval between the first of these and the last, of which we have spoken; and gives express Scriptural sanction, and therefore still greater significance to the illustration just traced.

The parallelism not to be pressed too far.

Yet it is not without weight.

Connected with it we may trace another which is also not without weight. Science has always found it difficult to determine exactly the geological time of the first appearance of types, even in a relative way. On few points, indeed, are the characters employed by that great book of stone which lies at our feet more difficult to decipher. Something they sometimes tell us, no doubt, as to the general prevalence of this or that order of life in this or that age of the past. But it is very rarely that they tell us as much respecting the exact date of its rise. The footprints, as it were, of the main body of processionists are often discernible enough to our gaze. But it is not so often that we find reliable indications of those of

The time of the appearance of types difficult to determine

The general prevalence of this or that order of life in given ages may be learnt, but not the date of its rise.

the vanguard as well. Over and over again, on the contrary, has the experience of more recent researches disproved on this point what previous inquirers had regarded as proved. In all such cases, therefore, it would seem to be obvious that the processions in question did not begin with very much show. That can hardly have been very marked or conspicuous at the time of its occurrence which has only left such scant traces behind. We believe, indeed, that this is what is generally held with regard to this point. What is true of individual, is believed to be true also of collective life, as a rule. It seldom, at starting, makes much noise in the world.

The entrance of the orders of life without show.

Life at starting makes little noise.

Are we not taught the same also, in the same general way, on the other side of our quest? In a certain sense that new and glorious "order of life," that illustrious "kingdom of God," the full development of which, according to Scripture, is reserved for the future, has already begun. It is a long time now since the original Exemplar or Leader of this "order of life" appeared on the earth. Ever since then, however, according to Scripture, a continual though far from universal process of conforming men inwardly to that same pattern has been going on in this world. Yet how true it is further —and that in both cases—that it has not been "with observation" that this "kingdom of God" has so far appeared. This is plain, on the one hand, of

The new "order of life" already begun.

Its appearance without observation.

The first appearance of the last Adam known to few and inadequately appreciated.

that beginning of all, the first appearance of the last Adam Himself! Who were there at the time among the children of the first Adam that were aware of that fact? And even among those very few who did know of the fact, who possessed anything like an adequate idea of its significance and importance?

The resurrection of Christ a mere report to all but a few.

Much the same was true also of that great second stage in this world-affecting process which took place when this glorious second Adam was raised again from the dead; and so was born a second time, as it were (Rev. i. 5). Except to a very few, at that time, that most momentous of earthly occurrences was nothing more than a thing of report. Nor are things very different, as a matter of observation, with all those individual cases of change of heart and of gradual conformity to the spiritual likeness of Christ, which we believe to be so many scattered yet united steps towards the consummation in view. How very little, if anything, is to be seen outwardly and at the time, of such inward transitions as these. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." And how little is known, therefore, of the actual existence among us of that whole family or class of men of the future, to which these changed persons belong. So hidden a factor

The great change in individual men unobtrusive.

Little known of the men of the future now among us.

are they, so comparatively unknown an ingredient, so unsuspected a power, as things are, in the world! Nor does it seem intended indeed, according to Scripture, that things should be otherwise with them in this respect, until that future time which is therefore spoken of as being their "manifestation" (Rom. viii. 19); and in regard to which, also, it is so emphatically said of them, that they are "then to shine forth" (Matt. xiii. 43). It would almost seem, in short, as though their present obscurity was intended to be in exact proportion to the future brightness of their lot. What impossibility of concealment then! What equal difficulty of discernment now! What a "trumpet" then! What silence now!

Their "manifestation" reserved for the future.

The contrast between their present and future lot.

One other point follows in connection with the first appearance of types. Such generally unobtrusive arrivals could hardly have been productive of any very great degree of visible disturbance in the general features of the particular life-scape in which they appeared. Not Alexander himself could fight many battles till he had left his cradle behind. We are not without positive evidence, indeed, of a condition of things which gives strong support to this view; positive evidence, that is to say, of the simultaneous existence on the arena of life of both the new dynasty and the old, something the same (shall we say?) as when the rising sun is seen facing the departing full moon. In some cases, in

Only little disturbance caused by these unobtrusive arrivals.

The coexistence of the new and the old.

fact, we see that the older form has not even yet been so far disturbed as to give way to the new. It is certain, *e.g.*, that many descriptions of plants which were flourishing in the world before the introduction of the cereals are living still by their side. And it is equally certain, we believe, that forms of marine life are now in existence which cannot be distinguished from certain other forms which are known to have inhabited some of the earliest oceans of which any record is left. Obliteration of type, in a word, in the days of the past has been usually slow.

Pre-cereal plants living by the side of cereals.

New and old forms of marine life.

Obliteration of type slow.

Does not Scripture also teach us the same respecting the new race of mankind? In a certain sense, as we have seen, this race has already begun. Many, at any rate, of those "copies" of the original "pattern" which are to make up that race at the last, are in a more or less forward state of preparation at this moment. As yet, however, there has been no serious disturbance, in consequence, in the general current of the older description of life. Neither are we to expect it, in fact, according to Scripture, during the present order of things. On the contrary, of "both" descriptions of life, as we see them now in the "field" of this "world," it is written expressly that they are to "grow together" until the "end" of this "age." Nor is it quite clear from the Bible, even of that "end" of so much, that it is

Scripture teaching on this point respecting the new race.

The older description of life little disturbed as yet.

Both to exist till the end of the age.

also to involve the total cessation of the present race of mankind.

This particular application of the principle before us must be taken, of course, for what it is worth. But the general fact that in the relative experience of the church and the world Scripture teaches us to see an old race existing by the side of a new one which is ultimately much to surpass it, seems to be beyond the reach of dispute. Here also we find the obliteration of type not by any means swift.

Scripture teaching as to the co-existence of the two races indisputable.

We come, lastly, to the very momentous question of cause. Doubtful indeed as may be the value of certain modern hypotheses which aspire to account for the amazing variety and multiplicity of life on this earth by merely natural laws, one of the principles embodied in them seems to be certain enough. The action of "environment" on that which it environs is undoubted and great. Put into other phraseology, this statement may not be quite so much of a discovery as some of its prophets seem to imagine; but it is none the less sure. That "man," at any rate, is to a large extent the creature of "circumstances," is what we have long known to be true. That the creatures which are below him in all other respects are not above him in this, seems to follow of course. Nor can it be doubted in fact, touching all the things that we see (at any rate) that changes in environment and

The question of cause.

The action of environment.

The influence of circumstances on man.

outward surroundings—changes in "circumstance, that is to say—have generally been the precursors of changes in that which was surrounded thereby. But this, it is evident, is only the beginning, and not the end of the matter. This does not tell us to what remoter causes these first-named external changes were due; still less to what still remoter causes those were due in their turn; nor would it mend matters very much, it is clear, if it did. No possible number of successive answers of this sort can exhaust the possibilities of the case. No matter how numerous these *transmitted* energies may be, the last of them will point us to the absolute necessity of an *un*transmitted one to begin. This is the conclusion to which we are brought by our own researches and reason. This is how observation suggests to us—how it almost reveals to us—the operation of "will."

The proximate causes to which the changes are due.

The necessity of an untransmitted cause to begin with.

Observation suggests the operation of "will."

The testimony of Scripture.

How actual Revelation speaks on the subject it can hardly be necessary to point out. It was a power wholly outside of man, according to it, which formed man at first out of the dust of the earth, and which afterwards breathed "into his nostrils" that "breath of life" which made him "a living soul." It was a similar power from outside, also, according to it—a like exertion of will—a corresponding word of command—which caused the earth and the waters to "bring forth" the lower life of the beasts, and the

The exertion of will caused the waters to bring forth, etc.

fishes, and the fowls of the air, on the one hand; together with the still lower life, on the other hand, of the grass and the herbs and the trees of the field. Nor is the case different in regard to that higher life of which we have now been speaking so much. Where are we to look for the force which changes the carnal into the spiritual; the rudimentary into the perfect; the mortal into the immortal; comparative death into superlative life? Not to anything already acting, or even already existing within. Not to any aspiration that comes from below, but to a command that comes from above. This is the uniform teaching of Holy Scripture respecting the whole of this change. It is by the presentation and special application of truth to the mind of the natural man, *e.g.*, that the higher life of his inward nature is described as brought into being (John xvii. 17; James i. 18). In other words, those persons who become the subjects of this unobtrusive but mighty change are described to us sometimes as being "born of the Spirit" or "born from above" (John iii. 3–8); sometimes as "born again by the word" (1 Pet. i. 23); and sometimes, with marked reference to both the negative and positive sides of the subject, as "born *not* of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John i. 12). Similar to this also is the language employed in the corresponding case of

The higher life due to the same cause.

The higher life engendered by the presentation and application of truth to the mind

The new birth of the body.

the new birth of the body. That also is spoken of, negatively, on the one hand, as a "house *not* made with hands;" and, positively, on the other, as a "building of God"(2 Cor. v. 1, 2), a "house from heaven," something formed from without. And to this same effect, finally, the apostle virtually writes when he says on the same subject (1 Cor. xv. 52), that "we shall not all sleep, but we shall all *be changed:*" that passive form pointing to an active principle which is outside of ourselves.

The final change.

So many are the lines in which this "new pattern of life" is found walking in the steps of the old!

IV.

The Position so Far.

The agreement so far of observation and revelation.

On all the topics as yet discussed by us on the twofold plan proposed at the beginning, we hope it will be found, on review, that our two oracles have been in agreement. *So far as they have gone*, they have helped in every case to illustrate one another.

Such a fact is one which appears, in every way, to be deserving of note.

Scripture and Science not hopelessly at variance.

It is so, first, in itself. If Scripture and Science were so hopelessly at variance as some have asserted, it would have been quite impossible to find *any succession* of correspondences between them.

It is so, next, in regard to the *number* of the

agreements in question. Roughly speaking, those now adduced will hardly be less than some twenty in all. In a case such as this, which depends on examples, this is of very great weight. How many matters of moment have been fully settled on the strength of very much fewer?

The number of the agreements adduced.

The fact before us is also worthy of notice in regard to the question of *kind*. How exceedingly diversified is the character of the regions in which these cases of agreement occurred! We have found them behind and before; up and down; here and there, as it were! In the pages of history! In those of prophecy! Amongst the organized! Amongst the unorganized! In the "world" within us! In the world around us! In questions of matter! In questions of mind! In questions of morals! In higher realms still! All this makes their argumentative weight a hundredfold more than if we had discovered them all as it were within a few yards of each other.

The variety of the agreements adduced.

Once more, this succession of correspondences is worthy of note in regard to the question of *source*. Can any two sources of information less apparently likely to produce such correspondences, be easily named? It is not only, as we noticed at first, that Revelation and Observation respectively address themselves to wholly different and even widely-separated regions of thought, in the main. That is only half of the truth.

The unlikelihood of their sources.

Another and equally important half is to be found in the fact, that, even when they do happen to have the same subject in common, it hardly appears, in their hands, in consequence of the different standpoints from which they approach it, the different fashions in which they handle it, and the different objects they have in view to be the same thing. The marvel is, therefore, in the instance before us, that we should so often have found the respective utterances of Scripture and Science to be, as it were, in "conjunction"; and, when thus in conjunction, instead of eclipsing, to have so illuminated each other. It really is not easy, as a question of evidence, to give too much weight to this fact. That so many instances of agreement, on so many different points, should be found on the part of two witnesses so singularly independent that they only rarely have any experiences in common, speaks volumes for both.

The weight of the agreements.

And therefore, of course, for that which we may speak of as their common result. In such circumstances we cannot reasonably doubt but that their main witness is true. Christ is indeed, as they teach us, on the one hand, the Crown of the Past! Christ is indeed, as they teach us, on the other hand, the Key of the Future! Both our authorities, and all our researches—on these points—are at one.

Their main witness therefore true.

Christ the Crown of the Past and the Key of the Future.

V.

Christ the Author of All.

This conclusion, however, must not be regarded as the conclusion of all. Rather, from one point of view, it is only the groundwork of a still further inquiry. If Christ be all this, He may be very much more. If He stands in these relations, He may stand in still higher ones, to the things that are seen. Our two authorities having brought us, as it were, to the very verge of this question, we are bound to see whether they can help us to settle it too.

A further inquiry.

To see this, on the one side, let us revert again to the vital question of "cause." That the proximate cause of all change of type is in something outside; and that the ultimate cause, therefore, however remote, must be in that outward force we call "will," we have already agreed. What we would ask now is, whether it is not possible for us to see some distance beyond. The notion of "will" seems to carry with it the notion also of person. Every *act* of volition assumes an *actor*—if so we may speak. It is in this direction, accordingly, that we would now endeavour to look. Where are we to seek for the "actor" of that special "act of volition" to which our thoughts have been turned? By whose "will" is it that this "new man" is caused to exist?

"Will" the ultimate cause of change of type.

"Will" involves personality.

By whose "will" is the "new man" caused to exist?

If the "actor" in question is to be sought in this world—and that "observation" of man to which we are now referring is confined to this world as a rule—there is but one reply, of course, to be given. The only conceivable earthly candidate for such a position is to be found in the person of Christ. On this negative side there does not exist even a cranny for doubt.

The only conceivable earthly candidate for the position is Christ.

Even on the positive side also there are not wanting phenomena which look like indications this way. What the skill of man can accomplish in this connection by the judicious use of certain energies which he finds in action both around and within him, we have already considered. To a certain extent he is thereby enabled to modify "life." To a certain extent, indeed—though only it appears in combination with great uncertainty both of result and duration—it is not impossible for him sometimes to cause new successions of life to come into being. This is one of the many ways in which he excels in action, as he excels in endowment, the rest of the animal world. That which they are unable even to think of, he is able to do.

What the skill of man can do in this line.

What is the natural inference, therefore, when we compare him, in this respect, with one so much *above* him as Christ? Evidently that this greater One should have the power of accomplishing very much more in this line. In a general way, indeed, we cannot reasonably doubt this being truly the

What the power of Christ may be expected to do.

case. The matter concerned is hardly one in which there might be a lack of superiority on the part of Christ without hurt. Could there be supremacy at all, in fact, if there were no supremacy in so (literally) vital a matter?

The kind of superiority implied befits the position of Christ.

Is it not clear also, if we think of it, that this is just the kind of superiority which befits the position of Christ? Let it be granted, as no doubt it must be, that the interval involved in this comparison is something enormous. To direct the development of a new variety of rose or pigeon, *e.g*, is one thing. To bring into being such a world of "new men" as the Scripture speaks of, is prodigiously more. It may even be true—it most probably is —that so enormous a degree of difference in result points to corresponding difference of at least equal magnitude in manner of working as well. Yet even this, it must be evident, by no means destroys the resemblance spoken of, *so far as it goes*. However different the two operations may be in dimensions, their directions are alike. However diverse also their manner and purpose, their intrinsic nature is one. What both end in, is the appearance of that which was not in appearance before. It would seem, therefore, on the whole that we are directed with double force to our present inference on this matter. The "resemblance" spoken of exactly agrees with the fact that Christ Himself was a man. The "difference" detected equally

An enormous difference.

A real resemblance

What the resemblance agrees with.

What the difference agrees with.

agrees with the fact that He was so much the highest of men! On the one hand, a merely subordinate change, brought about with very uncertain workmanship, and lasting (apparently) only a limited time; that sums up, in this direction, the whole working of *man*. On the other hand, an amazingly greater transformation, brought about with the certainty of a Master hand, and never destined to come to an end; that is the other work, on this line, into which we examine. Who more fitting than "the Son of Man" to be its author and cause?

What their combination implies.

This probability carries with it the possibility of wider work yet. Whatever the power which accomplished the greater, it cannot be unequal to doing the less. Nothing, in fact, that has ever yet been accomplished in this cosmos of ours, can be of a nature to be beyond the reach of that power!

Christ as the actual Originator of the highest, the possible Author of all.

This is abundantly plain. If we have really found in Christ the *actual Originator* of the *highest*, it also follows, of course, that we have found in Him the *possible Author* of *all!*

And therefore—of course, also—we have found in Him all that this means! All it means, however vast! however transcendent! Even if it involves ascribing to Him, as no doubt it does, the very Highest of Names! All this is virtually admitted when we admit His competency to be the Author of all!

What Revelation says to us on this subject is so very explicit that we need not dwell on it much. The testimony of Scripture.

It is by the "voice" of Christ Himself, *e.g.*, as addressed to men "now" (John v. 25), that their *spirits* are described in Scripture as being caused to "live" in His sight. And it is to be by means of that "voice" also, addressed to them hereafter (John v. 28), that the "resurrection of life," the change of the *body*, is to become theirs. To the same effect, also, we read of the one change, on the one hand, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph. v. 14); and, on the other, that "we are His (*i.e.*, God's) workmanship, created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. ii. 10). To the same effect do we read, also (of the other change), in such a declaration as this: "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by His Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. viii. 11.) Or, in such another as this: "He (that is, Christ) shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things to Himself" (Phil. iii. 21). Whatever is done in this way, in short, Revelation teaches us to regard as done in some way by Himself. Other names may be sometimes included. His is never

Both resurrection and regeneration ascribed to Christ.

The one the consequence of the other

No "new man" either in body or spirit except by Christ's power.

left out. According to Scripture, in short, there is no "new man"—either in body or in spirit—except by His power.

Equally plain are the declarations of Scripture respecting the origin of all the rest of creation.

All things created by Christ.

Sometimes we are told, *e.g.*, that God "created all things by Jesus Christ;" sometimes, that "by Him God made the [ages, or] worlds" (Heb. i. 2); sometimes, "that all things were made by Him," and that "without Him was not anything made that was made" (John i. 3); sometimes, that "all things were created by Him and for Him" (Col. i. 16); and sometimes, finally,

All things consist by Christ.

that "by Him all things consist" (Col. i. 17), and that He it is, who, seated now at the right hand of the throne, "upholdeth all things by the word of His power" (Heb. i. 2).

Observation and revelation bring us thus to see Christ as the Creator of all.

The general issue, therefore, of this brief further inquiry is like that arrived at before. Observation and Revelation had already brought us so far that little was required in order to take us a long distance beyond. The whole of that little, these two authorities have now effectually done. The one by its gestures, and the other by its speech, have conducted us on till we see Christ presented to us as **the Creator of all!**

VI.

The Position in Full.

The full position of Christ.

We may at last fully see, therefore, in the connection before us, the position of Christ.

We see, in the first place, that His relation to creation is not a simple one, but highly complex.

Christ akin to all that is made.

To a certain extent, for example, it is one of identification with it. Being man, Christ is what man is, viz., akin to all that is made.

Christ above all that is made.

On the other hand, it is also one of vast superiority to it. Even in the fact of having Himself furnished the highest example of the present race of mankind, Christ is above all that we see. Much more is He so in having become, in His own person, the beginning and model of that higher race which is to appear by-and-by on the earth. And most of all is He so, of course, in being the actual Creator as well of that race as of all it excels.

The consequent uniqueness of His relation to creation.

It follows, therefore, of the relation in question that it is something altogether unique. No other Name exists in regard to which *all* these things can be said!

The peculiar closeness of its intimacy.

It also follows, of the relation in question, that it is of a peculiarly intimate kind. Christ is at once the Fellow-creature and also the Creator of all that is made. Only one thing closer than these combined relationships can be even conceived.

The absolute universality of its influence.

It follows, yet again, of the relation in question, that it has the widest possible scope. It may be said, in fact, to be the keystone of the whole arch of existence. It is that which embraces, that which completes, that which unifies all. The seen and the unseen, the past and the future, the idea of development and that of creation, the discoveries of men and the revelation of God, are shown by it to be so many parts of one symmetrical whole. In a word, the earliest and the latest, the highest and the lowest, the furthest and the nearest, are all what they are because of the impress on them of their relation to Christ. As the Psalmist says, in another connection, "there is nothing hid from its heat."

The consequent inadequacy of all systems of knowledge that leave it out.

And it follows, finally, therefore, that all systems of knowledge must be miserably inadequate which leave this point out. A circulating system without a heart, a respiratory system with nothing to breathe, the solar system deprived of its sun, are none of them so deficient as is the conception of the cosmos without Christ. Nothing but fragments of knowledge can be obtained by us when when we try to study it so. Nothing, therefore, but what hides from us far more than it shows. Nothing, in short, but what conveys to us more error than truth!

VII.

The Conclusion of All.

A corroborative and supplemental word may be added, in conclusion, from a different region of thought. Instead of symptoms of advance, we have seen that sometimes symptoms of retrogression are discoverable in the creation around us. Those animals in caves, referred to before, which possess something of the form, but none of the power of organs of vision, appear to be cases in point. Their sightless eyes seem the survivals, and so the indices of a former condition of things; the marks, as it were, which point out to us the former height of the tide. Similar instances are to be found, in regard to the physical nature of man, in those deformed and stunted specimens of men which inhabit and infest the more crowded parts of some of our cities. And similar instances, in regard to their moral and mental endowments, in those races of men which are said to prefer falsehood to truth, even as a matter of taste. Compared with races which agree in treating deceit as both a folly and a dishonour, such races appear evidently to have gone down in the scale. A strong argument for this view of the case appears in the fact that under proper influences they can be more or less elevated therefrom; which is exactly parallel with what we find to be true of certain domesticated races of animals

Symptoms of retrogression in creation.

Deformed and stunted specimens of men.

Mentally and morally depraved specimens.

The possible elevation of such people.

which have been allowed to run wild. We can do with such races what we can never do with those that have always been wild.

These considerations may at least help to prepare us for hearing what Revelation has to say to us on the point under discussion. For hearing, for example, that the whole of our race is a fallen one. Fallen physically, and so subject to death. Fallen mentally, having the "understanding darkened." Fallen morally, and therefore standing in need of an outward law or command. Also, in regard to a still higher aspect of the question, they will at least prepare us for being told that spiritually speaking our race has lost the very conception of what was enjoyed by it once.

Our race a fallen one.

These lamentable evils involve necessarily other evils as great. In other words, besides being degraded, we are also condemned. Dark indeed, therefore, in both respects, are the natural prospects of men. The "good tidings" themselves begin their message by describing them so. As to our condition, they begin by telling us that we are "already condemned." As to our nature, they begin by telling us that it requires "creating" anew.

Also a condemned one, and so in double need.

What has been and is to be done for us in the way of elevation and renewal we have already considered in part. What has been done and is doing in the way of delivering us from condemnation has not been spoken of yet; and

Deliverance from condemnation.

is indeed far too vast a subject to be fully discussed in this place. But we may at least note here that Scripture always speaks of it as a work of such magnitude that, compared with it, even that of creation is small; and at the same time, also, as a work of such necessity that even that of renewal requires its accomplishment first. No extremer necessity, in short, is known to men, according to faith. Neither is there any greater enterprize than that of supplying it, according to faith. Here, in fact, is *the* "mystery," for the revealing of which, according to it, Revelation is given.

Its magnitude and necessity.

The relation of Christ to this work of works is at once the same as that which was shown us elsewhere, yet widely different too. The same in regard to the unquestioned supremacy both of His position and power. As in creation, so in redemption, nothing is done without Him. He is *the* Saviour, *the* Mediator, *the* Redeemer of man. On the other hand, the relation of Christ to redemption is entirely different in regard to the manner in which He carries it out. What He does in the one case by the exercise of His will, He is described as only achieving in the other by the deep humiliation of His Person. In the one, He is at the summit of all; in the other, for a season at least, at its foot. There, in the place of the King; here, in that of the criminal. There, bestowing life; here, yielding it up. In the one case, in a word, the

The place of Christ in redemption.

In what respects similar to His place in regeneration.

In what respects different.

Sceptre is His from the first; in the other, it does not become His till it has smitten Him first.

The twofold harmony of this with our previous conclusions.

We look upon all this as being strikingly in harmony with all that we have previously seen. In Nature and Time Christ is all in all by such a majestic and stepless advance as that which the heathen of old days ascribed to their gods. In Redemption and Grace Christ is all in all, by such a weary succession of blood-stained steps as only He could have trod. How well this agrees, on the one hand, with the unity of the Person! How equally well, on the other hand, with the diversity of the work! Can any redemption be brought about without cost? And is not such a cost amply sufficient even for such a redemption?

Its harmony with the unity of His person, and the diversity of His work.

In their several ways, therefore, we see the final conclusions to which our combined authorities have now brought us.

The consequent Sum of all.

The Secret of Creation is to be found in the Person of Christ. The Secret of Redemption is to be found in His Cross. There is not much wisdom—if there be any at all—outside of these truths! "In HIM are hid ALL the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

THE

PRESENT CONFLICT WITH UNBELIEF

A SURVEY AND A FORECAST

BY THE

REV. JOHN KELLY

Outline of the Tract.

THE Tract is intended to furnish a bird's-eye view of the conflict, for the use of interested onlookers and workers among the people, who are unable to read books on its various branches.

There are three divisions in the Tract: the first, some general aspects of the conflict; the second, some special features of it; the last, the issues of the conflict.

The extent of the present conflict, the popularization of it, the spirit of the combatants, and their attitude towards the churches are treated in the first section. The doctrine of Evolution; the new science of comparative religions; the substitutes for Christianity offered; the discussions relating to the value of Life; the Higher Criticism; Literary Criticism; the Place of Christ in the Conflict; and the unique claims of Christ and Christianity are rapidly surveyed in the second section.

Some of the chief difficulties in the way of the acceptance of the doctrine of Evolution; the difference in kind between Christianity and the great non-Christian systems, and the fatal defects of these systems; the miserable insufficiency of the offered substitutes for Christianity are pointed out. The ever-increasing mass of evidence in favour of the accepted dates and authorship of the Sacred Books, and the failure in destructive as well as in constructive criticism of the school of so-called Higher Criticism; the unreasonable and mischievous character of Mr. M. Arnold's Literary Criticism; and finally, the impossibility of accounting for Christ on any naturalistic theory, the contrast between Christ and the founders of non-Christian religions, and between Christianity and these religions, the practical test and special fruits of Christianity are briefly sketched.

References are given to the various numbers of the Present Day Series in which the subjects, more or less slightly referred to in this Tract, are treated. Guidance is thus furnished for the use of the PRESENT DAY SERIES as far as it has gone.

In the last section of the Tract the possible issues of THE PRESENT CONFLICT WITH UNBELIEF are glanced at; and it is shown that while the final issue is certain, the nearer issues are uncertain; and the need of something more than argument to bring men to heartfelt obedience to the faith, and to save them from their sins—even the Gospel, received "in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance"—is pointed out.

THE

PRESENT CONFLICT WITH UNBELIEF

A Survey and a Forecast.

INTRODUCTORY.

A SUBJECT so vast as THE PRESENT CONFLICT WITH UNBELIEF can only be treated in a very brief and compendious way within the limits of a TRACT. A bird's eye view of it, however, indicating its salient general aspects and chief special features, and glancing at its possible issues, will be interesting to the onlooker, who hears of the conflict on every side, but has not time to read books on its various branches. Such a view will also be helpful to those who are working among the people, and meet with persons who are unsettled or sceptical on one or other of the subjects in dispute.

The vastness of the subject.

A bird's eye view useful to onlookers and workers.

Every combatant in the Christian army is not placed in a position whence he can see the whole of the battle; his immediate concern is to quit himself like a man at his own post of duty; but he will not be less fitted for his own proper work in the conflict by taking, as occasion serves,

a wider survey of it, and estimating the strength and resources of the assailants of Christianity with which he believes his own highest well-being and the highest well-being of his fellow-men to be inseparably connected.

I.

SOME GENERAL ASPECTS OF THE CONFLICT.

1. The Extent of the Present Conflict.

The impressions of an observer of ordinary intelligence.

On looking round at the struggle now going on between faith and unbelief, an observer of ordinary intelligence, who does little more than dip here and there into the higher periodical literature of the day and notice the lists of books that are in circulation, can hardly fail to be struck by *the extent of the present conflict.*

The range of subjects now brought into the conflict.

It is no longer limited to questions concerning natural and revealed religion, the historical evidences of Christianity, the genuineness and authenticity of the sacred writings; it extends to the question of the existence and character of God, the possibility of miracles, the origin of the Universe, the age and origin of man, the nature of mind, the source, basis, and sanction of morals, the origin of religion in all its forms, the nature of the differences between the various religions of the world, whether there be any radical and essential difference between them

between Judaism and Christianity on the one hand, and the great non-Christian religions of the past and the present on the other. The conflict with unbelief at the present time, in short, goes down deeper and covers a far more widely-extended area than it ever did in any previous period of Christian History.

The conflict deeper and wider than ever before.

2. The Popularization of It.

A second aspect of the conflict with unbelief that must strike such an observer as has been supposed, is the popularization of it.

The influence of the new monthly reviews.

In his valedictory article on resigning the direction of the *Fortnightly Review* in October, 1882, the gifted Editor, referring to the influence of Reviews, of which the *Fortnightly* was the first English type, wrote:

"They have brought abstract discussion from the library to the parlour, and from the serious student down to the first man in the street. The popularity of such Reviews means that really large audiences, *le gros public*, are eagerly interested in the radical discussion of propositions which twenty years ago were only publicly maintained, and then in their crudest, least true and most repulsive forms, in obscure debating societies and little Secularist clubs. Everybody, male and female, who reads anything at all, now reads a dozen essays a year to show with infinite varieties of approach and of demonstration that we can never know whether there be a God or not, or whether the soul is more or other than a mere function of the body. No article that has appeared in any periodical for a generation back, excited so profound a sensation as Mr. Huxley's memorable paper on 'The Physical Basis of Life,' published in this Review in 1869. It created just the same kind of stir, that, in a political

epoch, was made by such a pamphlet as the 'Conduct of the Allies,' or the French Revolution. This excitement was a sign that controversies which had hitherto been confined to books and treatises were now to be admitted to popular periodicals; that the common man of the world would now listen and have an opinion of his own on the bases of belief, just as he listens and judges in politics or art or letters. The Clergy no longer have the pulpit to themselves, for the new Reviews become more powerful pulpits, in which heretics were at least as welcome as the orthodox. Speculation has become *entirely democratised.*"

The conflict among the masses.

Mr. Morley in this article was addressing the educated public. He did not take into account the masses of the people, among whom also an active conflict is going on. There are two weekly papers exclusively devoted to an anti-theistic propaganda, and a third pretty equally devoted to political and social questions, and to atheism.

The Secularist weeklies and monthlies.

The Secular Review and *The Freethinker* are the exclusively anti-theistic ones; *The National Reformer*, edited by Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant, the politico-atheistic one. The announcement is made in every number of the *National Reformer* that its editorial policy is *Republican, Atheistic*[1] and *Malthusian.* There are also two monthly magazines: *Progress; or, The Freethought Magazine*, and *Our Corner. Our Corner* discusses political and general subjects, as well as questions in controversy between faith and unbelief.

[1] It is only right to state that Mr. Bradlaugh says that he has never declared that *there is no God.* He only denies that there is *a personal Creator and moral Governor.* He inclines, we believe, to accept the system of Monism—a kind of idealised Materialism.

The Freethought propaganda

The Freethought Publishing Company issues and actively promotes the circulation of works regarded as fitted to further the cause on the lines of Mr. Bradlaugh's politico-social-atheistic programme. The conflict among the masses of the people is also carried on by means of tracts, pamphlets, lectures, printed and delivered, and public discussion. In their workshops and in their homes there is much free discussion, on all the vital questions in dispute, among working-men.

Unbelief has free access to all classes.

Unbelief thus may be said to have free access to all classes of the people, and free course among them. Time was, not so long ago, when the avowal of unbelief in many circles brought social discredit, if not complete social ostracism, on the man who was bold enough to make it. It is not so now. Many object to be called infidels and atheists, but Agnostic[1] is a designation which they do not disclaim.

The terms Atheist and Agnostic.

3. The Spirit of the Combatants and their Attitude toward Churches.

A third aspect of the present conflict with unbelief which must strike an onlooker is the spirit in which it is carried on by the combatants on either side, by the lecturers and writers who address themselves chiefly to the educated classes on the one hand,

[1] See Present Day Tract, No. 29, *The Philosophy of Mr. Herbert Spencer Examined*, by Rev. J. Iverach, M.A.

and by those who write in the Secularist press and speak on the Secularist platform on the other.

The fairness and courtesy of the writers in the higher reviews.

The amenities of controversy are observed in the literature for the educated. A spirit of fairness and courtesy, as a rule, distinguishes them. The new conditions under which the conflict is conducted — the champions of faith and unbelief agreeing to fight the battle in the pages of the same Review and speaking in their own names without any disguise—conduce to, if they do not absolutely necessitate, this mutual courtesy.

The licence of writers in the Secularist press.

The state of matters among the Secularists is quite different. In their press, the most outrageous and outspoken blasphemy, of the coarsest and most revolting kind, pictorial caricature of the most sacred subjects and themes, of God and of Christ, and the expression of the most unmeasured personal contempt for the champions of Christianity, are not indeed the only weapons used, but are weapons constantly in use.

The courteous spirit displayed in the public discussions.

In the public discussions with the advocates of Christianity, which form so marked a feature of the conflict as carried on among the masses, the rules of courtesy seem to be generally observed, as far as can be judged from the printed reports, but unbridled license is resorted to by many writers in the Secularist press.

Dr. Flint, in the Lecture on Secularism in his "*Anti-theistic Theories*," speaks of the temperate

and becoming language employed in the *National Reformer* and *Secular Review*. He would withdraw this description, so far at any rate as the *Secular Review* under its present management is concerned, were he to re-write his lecture now. Its style of controversy is frequently, in its way, as offensive to Christian feeling as the pictorial caricatures which appear in the *Freethinker*. A spirit of mildness and toleration on the one hand, and of bitter and uncompromising opposition on the other, marks the attitude assumed towards the Church by the representatives of cultivated Agnosticism and working-class Secularism respectively. The former, it would appear, in many cases at least, go to church, and give a kind of support to the clergyman, at least in the country; some actually go to Communion. The latter have not a good word for the Church or any Evangelical denomination or society, but oppose her root and branch. They regard her as a fountain of manifold evil, and would sweep her away altogether.

The attitude of Unbelief towards the Church.

The spirit of cultivated Agnosticism.

The spirit of working-class Secularism.

Striking illustrations of the attitude towards the Church of the two forms of unbelief have been given within the last three or four years, in articles by able writers. In the *Nineteenth Century*, during the year 1882, three articles appeared, entitled "The Agnostic at Church." The first was by Louis Greg. He puts the question, "Is an Agnostic justified under any ordinary circumstances in

The Agnostic at Church.

attending regularly the worship of a God, whom indeed he does not absolutely deny, but of whom he knows nothing?" The conclusion he comes to is, that for the sake of example to the lower and lower middle classes, who cannot frame their lives on an abstract idea, in order to co-operate with the parson, and strengthen his influence, the Agnostic should go to church, in the country at least. He grounds his conclusion on the fact that the parson is the natural leader in all work that is to be done for the moral and physical well-being of the people in the village, and that the Church does more good than harm directly and indirectly. He also thinks that his own know-nothing attitude of mind on the subject of religion justifies the conclusion. He repudiates the authority of the Bible and Prayer-Book, but recognises the beauty of thought and language which characterises them, and the beneficence of the influence they have exercised. He would not repeat the Creeds nor offer himself as a communicant, and would absent himself on the days when the Athanasian Creed was read.

Mr. Louis Greg's conclusion that the Agnostic should go to Church.

His reasons for coming to this conclusion.

Mr. Shorthouse's conclusion that the Agnostic should go to communion.

The second article was by Mr. Shorthouse. He expresses his general agreement with Mr. Greg, but goes further. He argues that the Agnostic should offer himself as a communicant, on account of his sympathy with the sacramental principle, which, he says, underlies all Church worship.

"This," he adds, "is the great underlying principle of life, by which the commonest and dullest incidents, the most unattractive sights, the crowded streets and unlovely masses of people become instinct with a delicate purity, a radiant beauty, become the outward and visible sign of inward and invisible grace. This principle, which underlies all things, is concentrated in the supreme act of Church worship."

Mr. Shorthouse on the sacramental principle.

The third article was, we believe, by a lady, and is signed J. H. Clapperton. She controverts Mr. Greg's reasoning, and maintains that truthfulness, which must form part of the creed of the Agnostic, requires conformity of outward personal conduct to the inward state of thought and feeling. On moral grounds, this writer's conclusion is irrefragable.

J. H. Clapperton's contention that outward conduct should reflect inward thought and feeling.

Mr. Greg, for reasons which he assigns, confines his discussion to attendance at the services of the Church of England, and sets aside the consideration of attendance at Roman Catholic and Nonconformist, except Unitarian services. If the truth were fully known, we believe it would be found that Agnostics are in the habit of attending the services both of Roman Catholic and Nonconformist churches.

Agnostics go to other than Church of England services.

Mr. Goldwin Smith, in his article, "England Revisited," in *Macmillan's Magazine*, October, 1886, referring to the rapid spread of scepticism and the passion for ritual, which he suspects to be symptomatic of a loss of interest in prayer and preaching, making show and music needful, says,

Mr. Goldwin Smith's view.

"When the Agnostic goes to church, it is to a Ritualistic church he goes." It is not always so. On Mr. Greg's principle, he would go to the parish church, whatever Church party or school of thought might be represented in it.

Startling revelations would be made as to the state of belief or unbelief among the people in large and influential congregations, Evangelical as well as Ritualist, Nonconformist as well as Church of England, if the truth on the subject were fully known. The Agnostic who goes to church is generally reticent—he does not open his mind to everybody. One of the ablest living Christian apologists in this country, once told the present writer his own experience of the unsettled and sceptical state of many minds in the large Evangelical congregation of which he was a member. People spoke freely to him, because they believed him to be open-minded and liberal. People will speak to one who has the open-mindedness resulting from thorough familiarity with the subject in dispute, appreciation of the points of difficulty, candour in dealing with them, and sympathy with the doubts and perplexities of unsettled minds.

The reticence of the Agnostic.

The qualities needful for dealing with unsettled minds.

The attitude of the Secularists towards Christian churches may be more briefly but very strikingly illustrated. A few years ago the editor of the *Secular Review* proposed a new departure in his paper; viz., that Secularist candidates should

The proposal of the Editor of the *Secular Review*.

come forward for seats in Parliament as the avowed advocates of Atheism, and that a measure should be promoted for placing all churches and chapels under the operation of a Permissive Bill, in the same way as the United Kingdom Alliance desires to place public-houses. Opinion on the subject among the party was found to be too much divided to proceed further, and the proposal was dropped. It illustrates, however, the spirit and attitude of some at least of the most advanced wing of Secularists towards Christian churches, and shows what things would come to if they had their way.

Division of opinion among the Secularists on the proposal.

The tolerance which distinguishes the combatants in the higher forms of literature may fairly suggest the question as to the depth of conviction which it covers. On this point Mr. Morley says, in the article already quoted:

How far the tolerance in the writers in the higher forms of literature goes.

"How far it goes, let us not be too sure. Intellectual fairness is often only another name for indolence and inconclusiveness of mind, just as a love of truth is sometimes a fine phrase for temper. To be piquant counts for much, and the interest of seeing on the drawing-room tables of devout Catholics and high-flying Anglicans" (he might have added others as well) "article after article, sending divinities, creeds and churches all headlong into limbo, was indeed piquant. Much of all this elegant dabbling in infidelity has been a caprice of fashion. The Agnostic has had his day with the fine ladies, like the black footboy of other times, or the spirit-rappers and table-turners of our own. When we perceived that such people actually thought that the churches had been raised on their feet again by the puerile apologetics of Mr. Mallock, then it was easy to

Is the conflict a tournament or a battle?

see that they had never really fallen. What we have been watching, after all, was perhaps a tournament, not a battle."

It is satisfactory to read, on Mr. Morley's testimony, that the churches have not fallen. There is no doubt that there has been much of the caprice of fashion in contemporary infidelity. Mr. Morley, in forsaking the editorial chair, and pursuing the course he has subsequently taken, has indicated pretty plainly his own conviction that the present conflict between faith and unbelief is a tournament rather than a battle.

The reality of the battle.

Making all allowance, however, for the element of fashion and unreality, there can be no doubt that there has been and is a real battle going on. Some distinguished champions of unbelief bear the scars of the fierce struggle through which they passed before they renounced the more or less orthodox forms of Christianity in which they were trained, and took up the negative ground ultimately occupied by them. To cite one instance alone—

Mr. W. R. Greg's account of the struggle through which he passed.

Mr. W. R. Greg, in the preface to his book, *The Creed of Christendom, its Foundation and Superstructure*, after stating the conclusions at which he has arrived, says,

"One word in conclusion. Let it not be supposed that the conclusions sought to be established in this book have been arrived at eagerly, or without pain or reluctance. The pursuit of truth is easy to a man who has no human sympathies, whose vision is impaired by no fond partiality, whose heart is torn by no divided allegiance. To him the renunciation of error

presents few difficulties, for the moment it is recognised as error its charm ceases. But the case is very different with the searcher whose affections are strong, whose associations are quick, whose hold upon the past is clinging and tenacious. He may love truth with an earnest and paramount devotion ; but he loves much else also. He loves errors which were once the cherished convictions of his soul. He loves dogmas which were once full of strength and beauty to his thoughts, though now perceived to be baseless or fallacious. He loves the Church where he worshipped in his happy childhood ; where his friends and his family worship still ; where his grey-haired parents await the resurrection of the just ; but where he can worship and await no more. He loves the simple old creed of his earlier and brighter days, which is the creed of his wife and children still, but which inquiry has compelled him to abandon. The Past and the Familiar have charms and talismans which hold him back in his career, till every fresh step forward becomes an effort and an agony ; every fresh error discovered is a fresh bond snapped asunder ; every new glimpse of light is like a fresh flood of pain poured upon the soul. To such a man the pursuit of truth is a daily martyrdom—how hard and bitter let the martyr tell. Shame to those who make it doubly so ! Honour to those who encounter it, saddened, weeping, trembling, but unflinching still ! "

The struggle in Mr. W. R. Greg's mind.

We cannot doubt that many a champion of unbelief bears scars of a similar kind of the struggle through which he has passed, though few have given such touching expression to their feelings. We can sympathise with the struggle and the pain of such a thinker, though we believe him to have missed the truth which he thought he had found, and to have embraced positive error. How real the battle is among the flower of our young men, every believing teacher of influence at the great centres of intellectual life knows; how severe is the struggle many of them have

Others doubtless have passed through similar experiences.

The battle among young men.

to retain the faith they brought with them from their homes to the University; how many are worsted in the conflict, make shipwreck of their faith, and go to swell the ranks of those who are labouring to overthrow Christianity. The fact that any man thinks it worth while "to dabble in infidelity," is a proof that a real battle is going on, that infidelity has made considerable progress—an amount of progress which may well cause anxious thought to all who have at heart the interests of the kingdom of Christ and the truth to which He came into the world to testify.

Infidelity has made progress.

One of the saddest facts in the conflict is this, that not a few of the leaders of the army of unbelief were born and trained in the Christian fold, and once professed the faith they now seek to destroy.

The Christian antecedents of many leaders in Unbelief.

Another proof of the reality of the present conflict is the uneasiness and unsettlement of mind felt by many people within the Christian Church, who, although they have neither tacitly nor openly embraced any form of infidelity and see enough in Christianity to keep them within its fold, see, at the same time, more in the facts and arguments brought forward against it than they are able to meet.

Uneasiness and unsettlement of mind within the Church.

II.

SPECIAL FEATURES OF THE CONFLICT.

1. The Doctrine of Evolution.

It is now time to look at the more important special features of the conflict. One of these is the part played in it by the theory of Evolution.

The fascinations of the theory of Evolution.

The theory is at once so simple and so comprehensive, so easily apprehended and so far-reaching in its application; the conception it gives of the processes by which, according to it, the Universe came to be what it is, and of the period of time necessary to bring about the result, is so magnificent, that it is little wonder that many minds are fascinated and overpowered by it, that the facts that make for it are made the most of, and the difficulties in the way of its acceptance minimised. These difficulties are indeed formidable. The following are some of them. Every effort to prove that life has ever originated from anything but life has hitherto completely failed. All the evidence we possess on the subject goes to prove that man appeared suddenly; and the earliest human remains known to us, show that primitive man was in all essential respects the same as the man of to-day.[1] The "rock record of plant-life"

The difficulties of the theory.

[1] See *The Age and Origin of Man Geologically Considered.* By S. R. Pattison, Esq., F.G.S., and Dr. Friedrich Pfaff, Professor in the University of Erlangen.—Present Day Tract, No. 13.

does not show that there has been a development from the less perfect to the more perfect forms of vegetable life.

The evidence for the truth of the theory incomplete.

Evolutionists meet difficulties like these by the expression of a hope that the complete proof of the doctrine at present lacking will one day be forthcoming. We may be excused for declining to receive the doctrine till the evidence is complete.

It is necessary to be on our guard against being carried away by the theory.

The imposing character of the theory should put us on our guard against being carried away by it, and lead us to keep in mind that although Evolution is treated as a practically demonstrated truth by many men of science, both believers and unbelievers, it is as yet simply an hypothesis awaiting conclusive proof—proof which perhaps *may* never be forthcoming, because it may not exist.

The number and nature of the missing links formidable.

The number and nature of the missing links in the chain of evidence necessary to demonstrate the theory are so formidable as to make the amount of faith needed to receive it as an established truth so great as to savour almost of credulity.

The theory neither non-theistic, nor anti-theistic.

Atheism and Agnosticism use the theory for their destructive and negative purposes; but it is well to remember that it is not necessarily a non-theistic, or an anti-theistic theory. Indeed, it may be said to require Theism to make it workable. Most defenders of the Christian faith take pains to show that it is consistent with Theism, though they may think that it removes God to an im-

mense distance from us. Some avail themselves of the teachings of distinguished non-Christian evolutionists to prove that it is not inconsistent with faith in Providence and in the efficacy of prayer.

Admissions of non-Christian evolutionists.

Thus Dr. Matheson uses such teaching. He says:

How Dr. Matheson turns them to account.

"When Mr. Spencer speaks of an inscrutable force lying at the basis of all things, what does he mean? Not simply that the first stage in the evolution of the world encloses an unfathomable mystery, but that every stage in the evolution of the world encloses an unfathomable mystery. To Mr. Spencer the primal force is not merely the first force, but the basal force, the force that lies at the root of every phenomenon. In every movement of matter, in every pulsation of life, in every movement of consciousness, there is in the view of this philosopher an unexplained something, a region which is perfectly inscrutable; the mystery which we commonly attribute to creation is with him a universal presence. Now, let us understand what this amounts to; nothing less than this, that the material chain of effects and causes is not in itself adequate to explain any phenomenon of nature or of life; that in point of fact the principle of external continuity is every moment transcended, but not superseded, by another mysterious principle of whose character and modes of action we are profoundly ignorant. Here, then, within the chain of nature there is a margin not only for that which transcends experience, but, what is of more importance, for our actual communion with that which transcends experience.

"Let us remember that on the principle of Mr. Spencer this inscrutable force in nature, however incomprehensible to us, is one that already comprehends us. If we agree to call this force inscrutable and unsearchable will, we shall already have established a scientific basis not only for belief in a guiding providence, but for the possibility of an efficacious prayer."[1]

Argument of this kind, which does not necessarily imply that those who use it accept the theory of

[1] From an Address delivered at Belfast, 1884.

Evolution as established, has its value in the controversy. It wrests the chosen weapons of unbelief from its hands, and turns them against itself. It is open to doubt, however, to say the least, whether the theory of Evolution is consistent with the whole teaching of Christianity—its whole teaching concerning man,[1] for instance—concerning the origin of the human race, the Fall, the first and second Adam, etc.[2]

Wherein the theory of Evolution is inconsistent with the teaching of Christianity.

2. The New Science of Comparative Religions.

Another special feature of the present conflict is the part the new science of comparative religions plays in it.

The study of the great non-Christian systems.

The great non-Christian religious systems are carefully studied, not only for their own sakes, as an interesting and important branch of human knowledge, but, on the unbelieving side, to prove that the difference between them and Christianity is only one of degree, and not of kind—that all religious systems alike are the product of the human mind merely; and, on the Christian side,

The purpose of unbelief in the study.

[1] See Present Day Tracts on Man, Nos. 12, *The Witness of Man's Moral Nature to Christianity*, by Prof. Thomson, M.A; 30, *Man not a Machine, but a Responsible Free Agent*, by Prebendary Row; 39, *Man, Physiologically Considered*, by Prof. Macalister.

[2] For contributions to the Theistic controversy see Present Day Tracts, Nos. 5, *The Existence and Character of God*, by Prebendary Row; 17, *Modern Materialism*, by Rev. W. F. Wilkinson, M.A.; 20, *The Religious Teachings of the Sublime and Beautiful in Nature*, by Canon Rawlinson.

to show by a comparison and a contrast between them and Christianity, that the difference between them and it is vital and essential; that Christianity contains every element of truth which they embody and teach; that it contains truth which they lack, and supplies a remedy for moral evil and a motive power for moral living of which they are wholly destitute. The strength of the case on the side of unbelief lies in the ethical teaching of some of these hoary systems, particularly Confucianism.[1] But while acknowledging to the fullest extent everything that can be truly said concerning the excellence of this moral teaching, as far as it goes, the Christian apologist can show that what Christianity has to offer is better than the best in these great religions.

The purpose of Christian believers in the study.

The strength of the case on the unbelieving side.

What the Christian apologist can show.

In discussing these subjects we again meet with the theory of Evolution as we do in the discussion of many other subjects,[2] but we are able to point out facts that seem inconsistent with it. We are able to point to the fact, that the further back we

The theory of Evolution in relation to this study.

[1] See Present Day Tracts, Nos. 14, *Rise and Decline of Islam*, by Sir W. Muir; 18, *Christianity and Confucianism Compared in their Teaching of the Whole Duty of Man*, by James Legge, LL.D.; 25, *The Zend-Avesta, and the Religion of the Parsis*, by J. Murray Mitchell, LL.D.; 33, *The Hindu Religion*, by J. Murray Mitchell, LL.D.; 46, *Buddhism*, by Dr. H. Robert Reynolds; 49, *Is the Evolution of Christianity from mere Natural Sources Credible?* by John Cairns, D.D.; 51, *Christianity and Ancient Paganism*, by J. Murray Mitchell, LL.D.

[2] See Present Day Tract, No. 48, *The Ethics of Evolution Examined*, by Rev. J. Iverach, M.A.

Facts inconsistent with the theory of Evolution derived from the study of the great non-Christian religions

go in the historical development of these ancient religions, the nearer we get to the sources of them, the purer they are found to be. A full investigation of the oldest religions of the world furnishes evidence of the all-but, if not the absolutely universal prevalence of monotheistic beliefs.[1] All this is exactly as it ought not to be on the assumption of the truth of the doctrine of Evolution, and exactly as we should expect it to be on the assumption of the truth of Christianity, as it has hitherto been generally received and understood.

The testimony of Sir Monier Williams.

It is worth while quoting here the testimony of an eminent specialist in the science of Comparative Religions with reference both to the theory of Evolution as applied to the subject and to the contrast rather than the comparison of the Bible with the sacred books of other religions. At the annual meeting of the Church Missionary Society in Exeter Hall on the 3rd of May, Sir Monier Williams said,[2] referring to the subtle danger that lurks beneath the duty (of missionaries) of studying the non-Christian religious systems:

His experience as a student of the Sacred Books of the East.

"Perhaps I may best explain the nature of this danger by describing the process my own mind has gone through whilst engaged in studying the so-called Sacred Books of the East, as I have now done for at least forty years. In my youth I had been

[1] See Present Day Tract, No. 11, *The Early Prevalence of Monotheistic Beliefs*, by Canon Rawlinson.

[2] *Record*, May 6, 1887.

accustomed to hear all non-Christian religions described as 'inventions of the devil.' And when I began investigating Hinduism and Buddhism, some well-meaning Christian friends expressed their surprise that I should waste my time by grubbing in the dirty gutters of Heathendom. Well, after a little examination, I found many beautiful gems glittering there—nay, I met with bright coruscations of true light flashing here and there amid the surrounding darkness. Now, fairness in fighting one's opponents is ingrained in every Englishman's nature, and as I prosecuted my researches into these non-Christian systems I began to foster a fancy that they had been unjustly treated. I began to observe and trace out curious coincidences and comparisons with our own Sacred Book of the East. I began, in short, to be a believer in what is called the Evolution and Growth of Religious Thought. 'These imperfect systems,' I said to myself, 'are clearly steps in the development of man's religious instincts and aspirations. They are interesting efforts of the human mind struggling upwards towards Christianity. Nay, it is probable that they were all intended to lead up to the One True Religion, and that Christianity is, after all, merely the climax, the complement, the fulfilment of them all.'

He discovers beautiful gems.

Observes coincidences and comparisons with the Bible.

Regards Christianity as the climax of them all.

"Now, there is unquestionably a delightful fascination about such a theory, and, what is more, there are really elements of truth in it. But I am glad of stating publicly that I am persuaded I was misled by its attractiveness, and that its main idea is quite erroneous. The charm and danger of it, I think, lie in its apparent liberality, breadth of view, and toleration. In the *Times* of last October 14 you will find recorded a remarkable conversation between a Lama priest and a Christian traveller, in the course of which the Lama says that, 'Christians describe their religion as the best of all religions; whereas among the nine rules of conduct for the Buddhist there is one that directs him never either to think or to say that his own religion is the best, considering that sincere men of other religions are deeply attached to them.' Now, to express sympathy with this kind of liberality is sure to win applause among a certain class of thinkers.

The main idea of Evolution erroneous.

Spurious liberality.

"We must not forget, too, that our Bible tells us that God has not left Himself without witness, and that in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him. Yet I contend, notwithstanding, that a limp, flabby, jelly-fish

The testimony of the Bible.

tolerance is utterly incompatible with the nerve, fibre, and backbone that ought to characterise a manly Christian. I maintain that a Christian's character ought to be exactly what the Christian's Bible intends it to be.

The manliness of the Bible.

"Take that Sacred Book of ours; handle reverently the whole volume; search it through and through, from the first chapter to the last, and mark well the spirit that pervades the whole. You will find no limpness, no flabbiness, about its utterances. Even sceptics who dispute its Divinity are ready to admit that it is a thoroughly manly book. Vigour and manhood breathe in every page. It is downright and straightforward, bold and fearless, rigid and uncompromising. It tells you and me to be either hot or cold. If God be God, serve Him. If Baal be God, serve him. We cannot serve both. We cannot love both. Only one Name is given among men whereby we may be saved. No other name, no other Saviour, more suited to India, to Persia, to China, to Arabia, is ever mentioned, is ever hinted at.

It points to one only Saviour.

How non-Christian sacred books are to be studied.

"What! says the enthusiastic student of the science of religion, do you seriously mean to sweep away as so much worthless waste paper all these thirty stately volumes of Sacred Books of the East just published by the University of Oxford? No—not at all—nothing of the kind. On the contrary, we welcome these books. We ask every missionary to study their contents, and thankfully lay hold of whatsoever things are true and of good report in them. But we warn him that there can be no greater mistake than to force these non-Christian bibles into conformity with some scientific theory of development, and then point to the Christian's Holy Bible as the crowning product of religious evolution. So far from this, these non-Christian bibles are all developments in the wrong direction. They all begin with some flashes of true light, and end in darkness. Pile them, if you will, on the left side of your study table; but place your own Holy Bible on the right side—all by itself—all alone—and with a wide gap between.

Reasons for contravening the favourite philosophy of the day.

"And now, with all deference to the able men I see around me, I crave permission to tell you why, or at least to give two good reasons, for venturing to contravene, in so plain-spoken a manner, the favourite philosophy of the day. Listen to me, ye youthful students of the so-called Sacred Books of the East; search them through and through, and tell me, do they affirm of Vyāsa, of Zoroaster, of Confucius, of Buddha, of Muhammad, what our Bible affirms of the

Founder of Christianity—that He, a sinless Man, was made sin? Not merely that He is the Eradicator of Sin, but that He, the sinless Son of Man, was Himself made sin. Vyāsa and the other founders of Hinduism enjoined severe penances, endless lustral washings, incessant purifications, infinite repetitions of prayers, painful pilgrimages, arduous ritual, and sacrificial observances, all with the one idea of getting rid of sin. All their books say so. But do they say that the very men who exhausted every invention for the eradication of sin were themselves sinless men made sin? Zoroaster, too, and Confucius, and Buddha, and Muhammad, one and all bade men strain every nerve to get rid of sin, or at least of the misery of sin; but do their sacred books say that they themselves were sinless men made sin? Understand me, I do not presume as a layman to interpret the apparently contradictory proposition put forth in our Bible that a sinless man was made sin. All I now contend for is that it stands alone; that it is wholly unparalleled; that it is not to be matched by the shade of a shadow of a similar declaration in any other book claiming to be the exponent of the doctrine of any other religion in the world.

What the Bible affirms of Christ.

What the books of other religions say their founders enjoined.

"Once again, ye youthful students of the so-called Sacred Books of the East, search them through and through, and tell me, do they affirm of Vyāsa, of Zoroaster, of Confucius, of Buddha, of Muhammad, what our Bible affirms of the Founder of Christianity—that He, a dead and buried Man, was made Life, not merely that He is the Giver of life, but that He, the dead and buried Man, is Life? 'I am the Life.' 'When Christ, who is our Life, shall appear.' 'He that hath the Son hath Life.' Let me remind you, too, that the blood is the Life, and that our Sacred Book adds this matchless, this unparalleled, this astounding assertion: 'Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, ye have no Life in you.' Again, I say, I am not now presuming to interpret so marvellous, so stupendous a statement. All I contend for is that it is absolutely unique, and I defy you to produce the shade of the shadow of a similar declaration in any other sacred book of the world. And bear in mind that these two matchless, these two unparalleled, declarations are closely, are intimately, are indissolubly connected with the great central facts and doctrines of our religion—the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, the Ascension of Christ. Vyāsa, Zoroaster, Confucius, Buddha, Muhammad, all are dead and buried; and mark this, their

Further testimony of the Bible concerning Christ.

No such declarations in any other sacred book in the world.

Christianity alone commemorates the passing into the heavens of its Divine Founder.

bones have crumbled into dust, their flesh is dissolved, their bodies are extinct. Even their followers admit this. Christianity alone commemorates the passing into the heavens of its divine Founder, not merely in the spirit, but in the body, and 'with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature,' to be the eternal source of life to His people. Bear with me a moment longer.

The gulf between the Bible and the books of other religions impassable.

"It requires some courage to appear intolerant—to appear unyielding—in these days of flabby compromise and milk and water concession; but I contend that the two unparalleled declarations quoted by me from our Holy Bible make a gulf between it and the so-called Sacred Books of the East which sever the one from the other utterly, hopelessly, and for ever—not a mere rift which may be easily closed up, not a mere rift across which the Christian and the non-Christian may shake hands and interchange similar ideas in regard to essential truths, but a veritable gulf which cannot be bridged over by any science of religious thought. Yes, a bridgeless chasm which no theory of Evolution can ever span.

"Go forth, then, ye missionaries, in your Master's name; go forth into all the world, and after studying all its false religions and philosophies, go forth and fearlessly proclaim to suffering humanity the plain, the unchangeable, the eternal facts of the Gospel—nay, I might almost say the stubborn, the unyielding, the inexorable facts of the Gospel. Dare to be downright with all the uncompromising courage of your own Bible, while with it your watchwords are love, joy, peace, reconciliation. Be fair, be charitable, be Christ-like; but let there be no mistake. Let it be made absolutely clear that Christianity cannot, must not, be watered down to suit the palate of either Hindu, Buddhist, or Muhammadan, and that whosoever wishes to pass from the false religion to the true can never hope to do so by the rickety planks of compromise, or by help of faltering hands held out by half-and-half Christians. He must leap the gulf in faith, and the living Christ will spread His everlasting arms beneath and land him safely on the Eternal Rock."

He who would pass from the false to the true must leap the gulf in faith.

3. Substitutes for Christianity.

Another special feature of the present conflict, is the recognition by unbelief of man's need for religion of some kind, and of the necessity of offering some substitute for Christianity.

The religion of Humanity.

The so-called religion of Humanity[1] is the only fully-fledged substitute in the field. It offers collective humanity, or the abstract idea of humanity, instead of God, as the object of worship.

It is provided with a ritual, a pontiff, a priesthood, with a calendar, festivals, and sacraments. It is needless to describe it in detail; its absurdities have been adequately exposed by many pens.

Its only noble characteristic.

"Almost the only noble characteristic about it," says Dr. Flint in his "*Anti-theistic Theories*," "is the spirit of disinterestedness which it breathes, the stress which it lays on living for others. In this respect it has imitated, although *longo intervallo*, the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But unlike the Gospel, although it enjoins love to one another with the urgency which is due, it unseals no fresh source, and brings to light no new motives of love."

Modern substitutes for Christianity generally.

Referring generally to modern substitutes for Christianity, Dr. Flint thus sums up the matter:

"The character of the religions which have been invented in the present age is no slight indirect confirmation of the Divine origin of the religion which they displace. If all that men can do in the way of religious invention, even in the nineteenth century, with every help that science can give them, is like what we have seen them doing, the religion which has come down to us through so many centuries can have been no human

[1] See Present Day Tract, No. 47, *Auguste Comte and the Religion of Humanity*, by J. Radford Thomson, M.A.

invention.[1] It could not have been originated by science; and were it withdrawn, science would assuredly find no substitute for it. Take it away, and we should be left even at this time in absolute spiritual darkness and helplessness. That is the truth which modern attempts to found and form new religions concur in establishing."

4. The Value of Life.

The discussion of the value of life is not a new one in the history of the conflict with unbelief, but it is a very prominent one in the present conflict. Never perhaps has this question been more discussed.[2]

Apart from revelation the value of life doubtful.

Apart from the light derived from revelation concerning the dignity and destiny of man, we do not see that a very strong case can be made out in favour of the proposition that life is worth living. No doubt, a man of a naturally healthy and vigorous constitution, mentally, morally, and physically, may, by the regular exercise of all his powers, and the temperate use of all the good the world offers him, obtain a large measure of enjoyment apart from any question of religious belief. No doubt moreover, much pessimism is traceable to ill-health, misfortune, and other natural evils. But the doubt whether life be worth living, the conviction at which so many, at least of the literary and cultured classes, have arrived in our day, that life

The sources of much pessimism.

[1] See Present Day Tract, No. 19, *Christianity as History, Doctrine and Life*, by Dr. Noah Porter.

[2] See Present Day Tract, No. 34, *Modern Pessimism*, by J Radford Thomson, M.A.

is not worth living, is clearly due to the theories of the origin and course and issue of things which they have adopted. Pessimism seems to be the necessary outcome of a system which rejects the idea of a personal God and a personal immortality, and teaches that the Universe, which originated in a vapour cloud, will issue in universal death, that causes are now in operation which will render the earth unfit for the habitation of man, and looks for the exercise of no power from without to renew and perpetuate the universe. This view of things cuts up by the roots the comfort which some profess to derive from the cold substitute of a race-immortality for the Christian hope and prospect of individual immortality, and leaves nothing but the unrelieved blackness and darkness of absolute despair.[1]

Pessimism the necessary outcome of unbelieving speculation concerning the origin and issues of the universe.

On this view, the possible progress of the race is strictly limited, and its extinction is certain. Sir William Thompson, one of our foremost physicists, calculates that the sun will be exhausted in five or six millions of years. This is a short time compared with the periods that the theory of Evolution demands for the age of the Universe.

The limitation of progress and extinction of the race certain on this view

The late Sir W. Siemens, then Dr. Siemens, did indeed propound a theory of the renewal of solar energy, in an interesting paper in the April number

Sir. W. Siemens's theory.

[1] See Present Day Tract, No. 8, *Agnosticism—a Doctrine of Despair*, by Dr. Noah Porter.

of the *Nineteenth Century*, 1882. This theory, if established, would relieve the gloom of the outlook from the scientific unbeliever's point of view, but it does not seem to have met with much acceptance.

Sir. W. Siemens's Christian standpoint.

Dr. Siemens wrote as a Christian theist, and regarded his theory, as undoubtedly it would do, if established, as justifying the lines of Addison:

> "The unwearied sun from day to day
> Does the Creator's power display,
> And publishes to every land
> The work of an Almighty Hand."

5. The Higher Criticism.

The discussion of the date, authorship, and authenticity of the sacred writings, both of the Old and New Testament, is not a new feature in the conflict with unbelief, but it is conducted on new lines and with new weapons.

The negative assumptions of the most advanced wing of those who discredit the traditional views of the authorship of the books of Scripture.

The most advanced wing of those who discredit the traditional views starts from the assumption of the incredibility or the impossibility of miracles. The supernatural in the history must be cleared away, the predictive element must be eliminated from prophecy. The methods of the so-called "Higher Criticism" are employed to shake the authority of the Books, and to show that they were not written by the men whose names they bear, nor at the periods hitherto regarded as the date of their origin.

The school of "Higher Criticism," however, includes some scholars who do not reject the supernatural, yet adopt to a large extent the critical principles of the most advanced representatives of the school. The assaults are directed chiefly against the Old Testament, but are not confined to it. The conflicting and ever-changing views and theories of the representatives of this school are not fitted to inspire confidence in their methods or results. The large amount of evidence to show that the Pentateuch was written by one who lived amid the scenes and at the period of the Exodus; the impossibility of the promulgation of the law having taken place at any subsequent period of Israelitish history;[1] the undying Messianic hope running through the whole of the Old Testament, and the definite predictions of a Messiah which defy any attempt to explain them altogether away;[2] the testimony of Christ to the Old Testament as a whole and to many leading events recorded in it;[3] the vital connection between the Old and New Testaments; the agreement arrived at by

The supernatural not denied by all scholars of the school of "Higher Criticism."

The evidence for the books of the Old as well as of the New Testament cannot easily be shaken.

[1] See Present Day Tract, No. 15, *The Mosaic Authorship and Credibility of the Pentateuch*, by the Dean of Canterbury; and No. 28, *The Origin of the Hebrew Religion*, by E. R. Conder, D.D.

[2] See Present Day Tract, No. 27, *The Present State of the Christian Argument from Prophecy*, by Principal Cairns.

[3] See *The Testimony of Christ to the Old Testament Scriptures*, by L. Borrett White, D.D. Crown 16mo. Book Series, No. 31. (R.T.S.)

scholars of every school respecting the four greater Epistles of St. Paul, which carry conclusions of the greatest magnitude and importance;[1] and the evidence from the character of Jesus Christ,[2] form a body of evidence which the assaults of unbelief can never really shake. On the principles of the negative criticism there is too much to explain away; and the rise and abandonment of one theory after another is a virtual confession of the impracticability of the task. Negative critics are consistent only in their negations. Their attempts at reconstruction are as mutually inconsistent as their failure in destructive criticism is complete.[3]

Too much to be explained away on the principles of the negative criticism.

Ever accumulating confirmations of the truth of the Bible.

Meanwhile, confirmations of the truth of the Bible in both its parts are constantly coming to light from many sources—from ancient monuments, from Palestine exploration, from history, from

[1] See Present Day Tracts, Nos. 2, *The Historical Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead*, by Prebendary Row; 24, *Evidential Conclusions from the Four Greater Epistles of St. Paul*, by the late Dean Howson, of Chester; 36, *The Lord's Supper, an Abiding Witness to the Death of Christ*, by Sir W. Muir; 50, *The Day of Rest*, by Sir J. W. Dawson.

[2] See Present Day Tract, No. 22, *The Unity of the Character of Christ; a Proof of its Historical Reality*, by Prebendary Row.

[3] See Present Day Tracts, No. 16, *The Authenticity of the Four Gospels*, by Henry Wace, D.D. No. 21, *Ernest Renan and his Criticism of Christ*, by W. G. Elmslie, M.A.; No. 26, *The Authorship of the Fourth Gospel*, by F. Godet, D.D.; No. 38, *F. C. Baur and his Theory of the Origin of Christianity and the New Testament Writings*, by A. B. Bruce, D.D.

science.[1] The results of the "Higher Criticism" can at most necessitate the reconsideration of some of the positions hitherto traditionally accepted, and some modifications in them, but by no means to the extent that even those who may be called the "right wing" of the school—those who still believe in supernatural, and, substantially, evangelical Christianity—suppose.

The results of the "Higher Criticism."

6. Literary Criticism.

Another less obtrusive, but remarkable feature of the present conflict with unbelief, is the use that has been made of purely literary criticism to get rid of the supernatural in the Bible and its religion.

The professed object of this attempt is in the interest of the Bible itself and in the removal of the hindrances which prevent its reception by the people. Mr. Matthew Arnold, who is its author, recognises in a sense, that the Bible and its religion are all-important. He holds that the Bible is misunderstood by all the churches, that they cannot conceive it without the gloss they put upon

Mr. M. Arnold's criticism.

The prevailing misunderstanding of the Bible by all the churches according to him.

[1] See Present Day Tract, No. 9, *The Antiquity of Man Historically Considered*, by Canon Rawlinson. No. 10, *The Witness of Palestine to the Bible*, by Dr. W. G. Blaikie. No. 32, *The Witness of Ancient Monuments to the Old Testament Scriptures*, by A. H. Sayce, D.D. No. 41, *Historical Illustrations of the New Testament Scriptures*, by G. F. Maclear, D.D.; No. 42, *Points of Contact between Revelation and Natural Science.* by Sir J. William Dawson.

it, and that this gloss cannot possibly be true. He regards this gloss as separable from the Bible, and believes that it must be separated from it, if Mr. Bradlaugh is not to have his way and the Bible to go. Wonderful to say, this gloss is the assumption with which all the churches and sects set out, that there is

The gloss put on the Bible according to him by all the churches.

> "a great Personal First Cause, the moral and intelligent Governor of the Universe, and that from Him the Bible derives its authority."

"This assumption," he says, "can never be verified, and the problem is to find, for the Bible, a basis in something that can be verified, instead of something which has to be assumed."

> "The want of culture or acquainting ourselves with the best that has been known and said in the world, and thus with the history of the human spirit,"

The cause of this alleged misunderstanding.

is, he thinks, the cause of this extraordinary misunderstanding of the Bible by all the churches and sects, and the first step towards understanding it is to see that

> "the language of the Bible is fluid, passing and literary, not rigid, fixed and scientific, language thrown out at an object of consciousness not fully grasped."

What Mr. Arnold leaves us by applying his principles to the interpretation of Scripture.

By interpreting Scripture in accordance with these views, Mr. Arnold gets rid of a "Personal First Cause," "a moral and intelligent Governor of the Universe," leaving us, instead, "a power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness;" finds religion to be "morality touched with emotion," and "conduct to be the object of religion and three-fourths of life." When these things come

to be thoroughly understood, then, according to him, we may expect the re-inthronement of the now dethroned Bible.

"To re inthrone the Bible," he says, "as explained by our current theology, whether cultured or popular, is absolutely and for ever impossible; as impossible as to restore the predominance of the feudal system, or the belief in witches."

What Mr. Arnold's method of commending the Bible is like.

Mr. Arnold's method of commending the Bible seems to the common-sense of an ordinary mind like nothing so much as betraying it with a kiss. It is like seeking to promote a man's vigour and capacity for usefulness by cutting out his heart. Advocated as it is with all the charm of an exquisite style, and with what has the effect at least of the keenest and most biting sarcasm, it has doubtless done deadly work in undermining the faith of many among the cultivated classes of the community, and more especially among the young. He has the faculty of inventing phrases which pass into wide circulation, and are fitted to become by their serious defectiveness the fruitful seeds of much error and unbelief. In addition to his substitute for God and his definitions of religion and conduct, his phrase the "sweet reasonableness of Jesus" is misleading by its utter inadequacy as a description of Christ's character.

Mr. Arnold's faculty of inventing phrases that come into wide circulation, and mislead by their defectiveness.

This seems to be the best that Mr. Arnold can see in the character of Christ. How meagre it is seen to be when we contrast it with the descrip-

The Apostle John's view of Christ contrasted with Mr. M. Arnold's.

tion given by the Apostle John of what he saw in Christ, in the first chapter of his Gospel, ver. 14:

"And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth."

These phrases of Mr. Arnold's are fitted to work in unsettled minds disposed to be sceptical, and help to produce the bitter fruit of confirmed unbelief in a personal God, supernatural religion, and a Divine Saviour.

7. The Place of Christ in the Conflict.

The last and most important and striking feature of the conflict is the place of Christ in it.[1]

No permanent standing ground between Christianity and Atheism or Agnosticism.

It centres more and more in Him, and more and more is it becoming clear that between supernatural Christianity and Atheism or Agnosticism there is no standing-ground that can be permanently maintained. The number of believers in God who are not believers in the highest claims of Christ is comparatively small. In this country at least, and

[1] See Present Day Tracts relating to Christ: No. 3, *Christ the Central Evidence of Christianity*, by Dr. Cairns. No. 21, *Ernest Renan and His Criticism of Christ*, by Prof. Elmslie. No. 22, *The Unity of the Character of the Christ of the Gospels, a Proof of its Historical Reality*, by Prebendary Row. No. 37, *The Christ of the Gospels*, by Dr. H. Meyer. No. 43, *The Claim of Christ upon the Conscience*, by the Rev. W. Stevenson, M.A. No. 52, *Christ and Creation*, by the Rev. W. S. Lewis, M.A.

on the Continent of Europe, we believe it to be a decreasing one. The Deists of last century have no followers in the present day. No one takes the same ground as they did. Christ Himself not only identified Himself with God, but in many sayings seems to identify knowledge of Himself with knowledge of the Father, and to teach that knowledge of Himself and knowledge of the Father are inseparable. The signs of the times seem to indicate that the truth of this will be verified in a wider and more literal sense than the one in which we have hitherto generally understood it. For ourselves, we do not see how Mr. J. Stuart Mill's terrible dilemma about the love and power of God can be met except by pointing to the gift and sacrifice of His only begotten Son, who was one with and yet distinct from Him.

The oneness of knowledge of Christ and knowledge of the Father.

"There is hardly a controversy," says Dr. Patton of Princeton, and he says so truly, "which may not be fought and fought victoriously on the battle-ground of Calvary."

Every controversy may be fought out at the Cross.

If He who bled and died there was, as we believe Him in our hearts to be, "God, of God, very God, of very God," and yet true man, made in all points like as we are, "yet without sin," there is an end of the controversy in all its forms; an end of the controversy about origins alike of the Universe, of Life, and of Religion; about the possibility, as well as the actual occurrence, of miracles, the future

life, and many other questions that occupy and perplex the minds of men to-day.

The Deity of Christ may be proved from the Gospels alone.

That Christ is God may be shown from the Gospels alone. Leaving out of account all questions as to date and authorship, and taking the books just as we find them, we have evidence enough to satisfy the inquirer that Jesus was and is the Son of God incarnate. We see in them One who was man, living within the limits and according to the laws of human nature, and yet who possessed a higher than mere human consciousness: a consciousness of oneness with God, of a superhuman—nay, more, of a Divine origin, and who had prevision of the termination of His own career and of the results of His own work which has been marvellously verified by the course of history. We see in them one who had knowledge of the human heart and the thoughts of men such as no mere human being ever possessed; who had no consciousness of sin, and could challenge men to convict Him of it; who displayed a meekness and humility unexampled in recorded human experience, and yet made claims of so astounding a kind that they would be impious if they were not absolutely true. We see in them one in whose mind there is the most perfect balance of all the powers, and in whose character there is every conceivable perfection without one single flaw. To what other conclusion can we come but that Jesus of

The portraiture we have in them.

Nazareth was all that He claimed to be, all that His followers in every age have believed and confessed Him to be. The portraiture of Jesus Christ contained in the Gospels has won the admiration of all the best minds in the ranks of unbelief. Testimony has been given to it by them which is really inconsistent with the principles they hold and teach, and is strong enough, we believe, to lead an inquirer to the conviction that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Saviour of the world.

The testimony of the best minds in the ranks of unbelief to Christ.

Only one writer[1] in the higher ranks of unbelief has ventured to breathe a suspicion against the perfection of Christ's character. The Secularists in this country have hitherto enjoyed the monopoly of the use of gross and revolting pictorial caricature. They too were the only assailants of Christianity who questioned, in carrying on the controversy in this country, the sanity of our Lord —until an article discussing the subject was recently admitted into the *Fortnightly Review*.

One exception in the higher ranks of unbelief.

Every theory propounded by unbelief to account for Jesus Christ as He is pourtrayed in the Gospels utterly breaks down. He cannot be accounted for on any naturalistic theory whatever. He is not the product of Evolution. He made a demonstrable breach in the law of continuity, and rose heaven-high above his earthly environment. He was in advance of His own age and of all ages.

The unaccountableness of Christ on any naturalistic theory.

[1] Francis Newman.

Christ absolutely unique in human history.

He stands out an absolutely unique character in human history. He is the key of human history, the origin and end of all things. In the testimony of the risen Saviour Himself alone can we find the most fitting words to bring Him fully before us: "I am the First and the Last, and the Living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades."[1]

8. The Unique Claims of Christ and Christianity.

The claims of Christ unparalleled.

Here then the Christian may take his stand. None of the founders of the great non-Christian religious systems has ever advanced such claims as Christ to be perfect man and true God—a Divine and all sufficient Saviour.

Sustained by clear and intelligible evidence.

The claims of none of the founders of the great non-Christian religious systems have ever been sustained by evidence so clear and intelligible. Christ's character has been subjected to the keenest criticism for eighteen centuries, and no one has been able to prove that any flaw is to be found in it.

His power over the moral and material world, and over human hearts.

No founder of any other great religious system has ever displayed such power alike over the moral and the material world—a power purely beneficent in its character? His works have a moral stamp worthy of the perfection of His character, they are

[1] Revelation i. 18 (R.V.).

an integral part of the revelation of the Father made by Him.[1] His power over human hearts is as great to-day as it was in the days of His flesh, and is experienced by a vastly greater number of persons.

The provisions of Christianity unique.

No system but Christianity provides an adequate remedy for the universal malady of sin,[2] true and efficacious help and consolation in all the sorrows and trials of life, a moral ideal for the guidance of life, so lofty,[3] and a motive power of such potency to produce obedience and self-sacrifice. No other system holds out the hope of a blessed and glorious future of endless existence, the supreme attraction of which is the unclouded vision of Him who is the brightness of the glory of God the Father, and participation in His perfect holiness.[4]

The test proposed by Christ.

Christ subjects His religion to the practical test: "By their fruits ye shall know them." This is a test which any one can apply. Practice, not mere profession, is the ultimate test to which Christ

[1] See Present Day Tract, No. 1, *Christianity and Miracles at the Present Day*, by Dr. Cairns.

[2] See Present Day Tracts, Nos. 35, *The Divinity of our Lord in Relation to His Work of Atonement*, by Rev. W. Arthur. No. 44, *The Doctrine of the Atonement Historically and Scripturally Examined*, by Dr. Stoughton.

[3] See Present Day Tract, No. 40, *Utilitarianism*, by Prof. Thomson.

[4] See Present Day Tract, No. 45, *The Resurrection of Jesus Christ in its Historical, Doctrinal, Moral, and Spiritual Aspects*, by Rev. R. McCheyne Edgar, M.A.

submits his religion. Love is the all-comprehensive fruit which Christianity is intended to produce—holy, practical, self-sacrificing love—a love inspired by unreserved trust in Christ, which shows itself by obedience to all His commandments. What other religion has produced so plentiful a crop of labours of love of every kind as the religion of Christ? Philanthropy as we know it, as it has been developed during the last eighteen centuries, is the peculiar fruit of Christianity. Perhaps there never has been a more abundant growth of it than in our own day. There can be little doubt that much of the philanthropic effort that has no formal connection with Christianity is the result of the indirect influence of the Gospel of Christ on the thoughts and conduct of men.[1]

The evidence of Christian philanthropy.

The indirect influence of Christianity.

III.

CONCLUSION.

The Issues of the Conflict.

Before closing this rapid survey of the Present Conflict with Unbelief, it may be well to consider

[1] See Present Day Tract, No. 4, *Christianity and the Life that now is*, by Dr. Blaikie. No. 6, *The Success of Christianity and Modern Explanations of it*, by Dr. Cairns. No. 7, *Christianity and Secularism*, by Dr. Blaikie. No. 23, *The Vitality of the Bible*, by Dr. Blaikie. No. 31, *The Adaptation of the Bible to the Needs and Nature of Man*, by Dr. Blaikie.

the possible issues of it. Of the ultimate triumph of the truth, however long the conflict may endure, no Christian can have any doubt.

The ultimate triumph of Christianity certain.

It is not the ultimate issues, however, so much as the nearer and more uncertain issues that we would consider. We would glance at a few of those indications which may help us to form an opinion as to the possible earlier issues of the conflict, and confine our view to those indications as affecting our own country.

When we think of the prevalence of unbelief and of the present conflict with unbelief, we think chiefly of the cultured classes on the one hand, and of the masses of working people among whom the Secularist propaganda is carried on on the other.

Touching the former classes, the state of mind that prevails is delineated in a striking manner in an article that appeared in the *Spectator* of the 20th November, 1886, entitled, "Will Culture outgrow Christianity?"

The state of mind among the cultured classes.

The article was occasioned by a lecture on the subject, addressed to the students of Manchester New College, by Professor Upton. The writer says:

Professor Upton's address.

"While Professor Upton chooses strong ground when he uses the very conception of Evolution to refute the view that this process should have produced a religious being only to disappoint cruelly all the religious instincts it had fostered, he seems to us to ignore in some degree the strength of the evidence that for some time back Culture has been so far outgrowing

The speculation on the subject.

Christianity as to deprive a much larger portion of the cultivated world of its Christian faith than ever was deprived of that faith by culture, at least since the revival of learning."

Contrasting the days of Butler with our own, the writer in the *Spectator* says, referring to the former,

"It was less culture than cynicism that paralyzed Christian feeling."

And goes on to add:

The considerations pressed on the man of culture.

"But now it may be said in a very real sense that it is culture which endangers Christianity; that the consciousness of the wideness of the field of knowledge, of the number and minuteness of the difficulties in the way of conviction, the daunting uncertainty that not even the most learned man can survey, much less grapple with, the multitude of the considerations which may be fairly and honestly said to bear directly on the truth or falsehood of the Christian creed. Libraries may be collected on but one aspect of the question; philology, scholarship, critical learning be heard on one great class of questions; philosophy, psychology, physiology, put in their claims to a hearing on another. Then comes science with the *à priori* improbability—or if it be very rash, it will say impossibility—of the Christian story; and then finally, the student of the mythologies and of the various superstitions of the different savage tribes claims to have his account of the matter heard, in order that the believer may learn from it a legitimate self-distrust. Amidst this wilderness of evidence of all kinds, the man of culture not unnaturally gets dazed and paralyzed by all these cross-claims on his judgment, and so it happens that in his mind Culture tends to outgrow Christianity. In relation to all aspects of it, he finds in himself a number of half-matured thoughts and half-finished trains of reasoning, and his mind becomes a mass of suspended judgments and postponed investigations. Is it or is it not likely that Culture will outgrow Christianity? It can hardly be denied that in our own age culture has frequently outgrown the political doctrines of the last age, and the social conditions on which the cohesion of society rested; and that in many cultivated minds Nihilism-Socialism, Anarchism have been the result while in a very

The effect upon him.

Will culture outgrow Christianity?

much larger number of cultivated minds a deep despair of ever attaining to certainty solid enough to convince the multitude has superseded all the old and firmly-established convictions. Will not the same process unsettle still more effectually religious conviction? Will any clear guiding belief grow out of the crowd of suspended beliefs in which the tournament of controversialists has ended."

In answer to these questions of the writer in the *Spectator*, we may say for ourselves, *viewing the conflict as a merely intellectual one from its merely human side*,—without for one moment granting that the weight of argument on any position in dispute is on the side of unbelief, or that Christian faith will ever become extinct, even for a time,—religious convictions may become more unsettled, and it is possible enough that no clear guiding belief may grow out of the crowd of suspended beliefs; unbelief *may* become more generally prevalent—may win what may be regarded as a triumph for a time. At the worst it will only be for a time, but its temporary wider spread is, to say the least, a possibility. We can point to great names in the ranks of culture, literary and scientific, that are Christian; we can point to many hopeful signs at our universities and elsewhere; but making all allowance for the hopeful signs, facts do not justify the most sanguine anticipations concerning the earlier and nearer issue of the present conflict with unbelief in the cultivated classes, especially among those who may be so described in the higher and stricter sense, and whom the writer in

Unbelief may become more prevalent.

Scientific and literary Christians of eminence.

the *Spectator* had probably in view, rather than the educated classes generally.

The state of the masses.

Touching the masses among whom the Secularists chiefly work, those who know their state of mind best tell us that, viewing them as a whole, and making all allowance for the measure of success which certain Christian agencies have had among them, their feeling in relation to Christianity is one of indifference, more than of positive unbelief—that they are prejudiced against the churches. A contingent of them, as we know, is actively opposed to all religion. The masses are specially open to the influence of the Secularist leaders, who identify themselves with their most advanced political aspirations and principles. The question is, Are they likely to be won over to the camp of positive, anti-theistic unbelief?

The masses open to the influence of the Secularist leaders.

The possibility of their being won over to Secularism.

We cannot see how, looking at their actual condition, and their practical relation to Christianity and to Christian agencies, the possibility of this can be denied. It would be going much too far to say that there is a likelihood of their going over in a body to the camp of Secularism. Much special effort is being put forth by churches, societies, and agencies of various sorts to win them to Christ and the Gospel. Never, perhaps, was more earnest thought and effort directed to this end; but as yet there are few signs of a general breaking-up of their indifference, of a general

abandonment of their prejudices, and a general disposition to accept Christianity. There is much in the spirit and efforts of the Christian community to excite hopes, but surely there is much in the state of the masses of the people to excite misgivings.

The facts should be fairly faced.

The true state of the case should be fairly and fully looked at; if so looked at, the champion of Christianity and the herald of the Gospel will not be unmanned, but rather nerved for the conflict. Any under-estimate of the strength and resources of the foe, any exaggerated estimate or a too confident reliance on the human and material resources of the Christian Church, and any too sanguine anticipation of the speedy and complete triumph of the truth, are likely to lead to defeat and disappointment. The final triumph of the truth is certain, but the conflict may be long, and, judged by the numbers of avowed followers on either side, the fortunes of the fight may fluctuate.

The conflict may be long, its fortunes may fluctuate.

An unsatisfactory sign.

In one view it is not altogether satisfactory that at this time of day so many of the best and finest minds in the Church of Christ, are engaged in the defence of the truth against the assaults of unbelief, instead of being given to its proclamation and exposition. It argues the existence of already widespread unbelief and still wider unsettlement in men's minds. In another view it is a very hopeful sign, showing as it does that Christianity has champions who can meet on equal

terms the foremost leaders of unbelief, and that the taunt of the Secularists, that the Gospel can be "preached, but not defended," is unfounded, and encouraging us to believe that men capable of maintaining the faith in face of the fiercest opposition will always be raised up in the time of need. The work of defending the faith can never be wisely neglected by the Christian Church; but it must ever be remembered that it can at best only confirm the believer, silence the gainsayer, and produce intellectual conviction in the doubter. Something more than argument is needful to bring men to heartfelt obedience to the faith, to save men from their sins, to overcome the inherited bias to evil native to the human heart, which leads to resistance to the truth of God, even the Gospel "received in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." It will be a very hopeful sign when the need and the demand for apologetic work become less and less, and the need and the demand for positive and constructive work become more and more, because men, conscious of a darkness which no mere advance of knowledge can ever dissipate, and of needs which no human or earthly resources can ever supply, are disposed to learn of Him who is "the Light of the world," and are hungering for "the Bread of Life."

What argument can do.

What is needed for salvation from sin.

What is most to be desired.

THE EVIDENTIAL VALUE

OF THE

OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S DAY

BY THE

REV. G. F. MACLEAR, D.D.

Argument of the Tract.

THE force of the evidence in favour of a belief derived from public services contemporaneous with its origin, and uninterruptedly perpetuated throughout the body which holds it, is pointed out. The earliest evidence for the observance of the Lord's Day is adduced. The testimony of St. John and St. Paul on the subject, in the light of their nationality and training, and the significance of the term "The Lord's Day," are examined. It is pointed out that the observance of the Day, though not enacted by a law in the Apostolic Church, yet grew up and made its way by the intrinsic weight of some overwhelming reason for it. The question, What was this reason? is answered, and the conclusion is arrived at that the historical fact of the Resurrection of the Lord alone affords an adequate explanation of its origin and observance.

THE EVIDENTIAL VALUE

OF THE

OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S DAY.

SECTION I.

1. It has truly been observed that "no evidence of the power and reality of a belief can be less open to suspicion than that which is derived from public services, which, as far as all evidence reaches, were contemporaneous with its origin, and uninterruptedly perpetuated throughout the body which holds it."[1] Amongst these public services none is more striking than the observance amongst all Christian nations of "the Lord's Day."

The value of public services as evidence of the power and reality of a belief.

11. However the observance of this particular day may have originated, here it is. It has lasted through more than eighteen hundred years. It has survived many storms and revolutions. During these centuries the most diverse political systems have been established and overthrown. Empires, dynasties, kingdoms have passed away. New worlds have been discovered. The very languages

The fact of the observance of the Lord's Day.

Its long continuance.

[1] Westcott's *Gospel of the Resurrection*, pp. 131, 132. Ed. 3.

which were spoken during the early period of these centuries have given place to others. Habits, manners, modes of thought, theories, opinions, philosophies have changed. But the observance of this day, "the first day of the week," as a day set apart for religious worship, still survives. Except for a brief period of madness during the reign of terror in France, the observance has known no discontinuance, and has won for itself the reverent acquiescence of some of the greatest intellects the world has ever seen.

It survives all changes.

III. During these eighteen hundred years there have been various enactments put forth respecting the observance of this day. Passing over those of modern and mediæval times, let us take one which is found amongst the decrees of the first Œcumenical Council of Nicæa, A.D. 325. We find it laid down by the Fathers there and then assembled, that,

Enactments with reference to the observance of the day.

"Forasmuch as some *on the Lord's Day* bow the knee in prayer, as also on the other Days of Pentecost, for the sake of uniformity they now shall stand to offer their prayers to God."[1]

IV. What is noticeable here is that the members of the Council, assembled as they were from the most diverse parts of the Roman world, yet make no doubt as to the obligation of this day. They do not ordain it. They do not defend it. They assume it as an existing fact, and refer to it quite incidentally for the purpose of regulating an indif-

The obligation of the day recognized not ordained by the Council of Nicæa.

[1] Council Nic. Can. xx.

ferent matter—the posture of Christian worshippers on this day.

The Edict of Constantine.

v. Four years previous to this Council, we find the Emperor Constantine, A.D. 321, laying it down in an edict, which was to apply to Christians as well as Pagans, that there should be on the first day of the week a cessation from business on the part of functionaries of the law and of private citizens. The Emperor does not indeed call it the first day of the week. He terms it the "venerable Day of the Sun." But he does not anticipate that his Christian subjects will misunderstand him, or object to the observance here prescribed. Nor do we anywhere read of their doing so. They acquiesce in the prohibition of business on this day, and therefore we may presume they deemed they had reason for doing so. The expression "Day of the Sun," our Sunday, was quite familiar to the Christians in the times of the Emperor, and in this edict he calls the day by a name which, as it was in ordinary use, could not possibly offend his heathen subjects.[1] What is worthy of remark here is that, like the authors of the Nicene Canon, Constantine offers no word in defence of the obli-

Its provisions acquiesced in.

The obligation to observe the day not defended.

[1] "Omnes judices urbanæque plebes et cunctarum artium officia venerabili die Solis quiescant." "Let all judges and peoples of towns, and the duties of all professions cease on the venerable day of the Sun." See Richard Baxter's remarks on this decree in his treatise on *The Divine Appointment of the Lord's Day*, p. 41.

gation to observe the day. With them he equally assumes that this will be at once recognised.

The testimony of various bishops of the early Church to its observance.

VI. Pursuing our course still further back we find, in the year A.D. 300, Peter, bishop of Alexandria, saying, "We keep the *Lord's Day* as a day of joy,"[1] and in a Synodical letter, issued in A.D. 253, we have Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, mentioning as a notorious fact the celebration of "the Lord's Day," which is at once "the eighth and the first."[2] Tertullian, speaking about fifty years before (A.D. 200), of the solemnity of the Lord's Day, calls it sometimes "Sunday," sometimes "the first day of the week."[3] About the year A.D. 170, Melito, bishop of Sardis, puts forth a treatise respecting the day, and Dionysius, bishop of Sardis, writing to the Church of Rome, mentions its observance quite casually and without any word of explanation. If we go back thirty years, we come to Justin Martyr, who flourished in A.D. 140. He mentions the first day of the week as the chief and first of days, and states that on it is held an assembly of all who live in the cities and in the rural districts, on which the writings of the Prophets and the Memoirs of the Apostles are read.[4] Still earlier, about A.D. 112, Pliny the Younger, writing as governor of Pontus and Bithynia, to the Emperor

The testimony of Pliny the Younger.

[1] Την κυριακην χαρμοσυνης ημέραν ἄγομεν.

[2] See Dr. Hessey's *Bampton Lectures*, Lect. i., ii.

[3] Tertull. *Apol.* c. 6; *De Cor.* c. 3.

[4] Justin Martyr, *Apol.* i.; *Dial. c. Tryph.*

Trajan, describes the Christians as accustomed to meet together on "a stated day" (*stato die*) before it was light, for the purpose of worship.[1]

VII. The catena is thus fairly complete during the second century. From the letter of this heathen Proconsul it is but a step, whether we take the earlier or the later date of its composition, to the Apocalypse of St. John. Writing from his place of exile to the Seven Churches of Asia Minor, he says without a syllable of comment or explanation, as though his meaning would be at once understood, "I was in the Spirit on *the Lord's Day*."[2] But still earlier, in a letter writen by St. Paul from Ephesus, A.D. 57, to the Church of Corinth, the Apostle says, "*Upon the first day of the week*, let every one of you lay in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." The authenticity of this letter is not denied by the most remorseless modern criticism; and as he assumes that the Corinthians observe this day, so we find the Apostle observing it himself. Thus we read of his spending a week at Troas, and when "on *the first day of the week*" the disciples were "gathered together to break bread," "he discoursed with them."[3]

The Apocalypse of St. John.

The First Epistle to the Corinthians

St. Paul's own practice.

VIII. Now what is very singular is that we

[1] Pliny's Letters, xcvi.

[2] Ἐγενόμην ἐν Πνεύματι ἐν τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ. Apoc. i. 10.

[3] Acts xx. 7.

The observance of the Lord's Day never made a matter of question or argument in the Apostolic or sub-Apostolic age, by Constantine, or the Council of Nicæa.

never find the dedication of this day to religious worship made a matter of question or argument. It is never elaborately defended against objectors. It is accepted without dispute by St. Paul, St. Luke, and St. John, by writers of the sub-Apostolic age, by Constantine in his imperial decrees, by the Fathers of the Council of Nicæa in their Canons. I say the assumption of a valid reason for the observance of this day, without any explanation or laboured apology, is very remarkable. It is obvious that for some cause or other, it was deemed that the observance of the day could command an *instinctive assent*. The inquiry, therefore, naturally suggests itself, What were the grounds that justified it?

SECTION II.

The need of its justification shown

I. THAT its observance needs justification will be apparent on very little reflection. For St. Paul, who thus speaks of the "first day of the week," and St. John, who represents himself as having been in the Spirit on "the Lord's Day," had been brought up in the strictest principles of Judaism.

The language of St. Paul and St. John.

II. Let us deal first with St. Paul. Finding it necessary on one occasion to defend himself against certain false teachers, who prided themselves on their purely Jewish extraction, he emphasizes with particular minuteness the purity of his own descent. "Are they Hebrews?" he asks, and replies, "So

The purity of St. Paul's Hebrew descent.

am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I."[1] On another occasion, writing to the Galatians, he describes himself as being "advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of his own age among his countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of the fathers."[2] Once more addressing the men of his nation at Jerusalem, he says, "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the strictest manner of the law of our fathers."[3] On yet another occasion he says, "I am a Pharisee, the son of Pharisees."[4] Thus St. Paul was a Hebrew of the Hebrews.

His proficiency in the Jews religion.

The strictness of his Jewish education.

III. Next let us take St. John. Though he never was, like the great Apostle of the Gentiles, at one of the Rabbinical schools, yet he was a Jew of Northern Palestine, and while unacquainted with the glosses of tradition, he kept the old simple faith in the letter of the law. Once and again his zeal broke out against those who did not think as he did,[5] and against those who, like the Samaritan villagers, refused to treat his Master with hospitality.[6] In the Acts we find him keeping the feast of Pentecost,[7] frequenting the Temple, observing the Jewish hours of prayer, and conforming to Jewish usages.[8]

St. John—a Jew of Northern Palestine.

His zeal.

His conformity to Jewish usages.

[1] 2 Cor. xi. 22, 23.
[2] Gal. i. 14. R.V. [3] Acts xxii. 3. [4] Acts xxiii. 6, R.V.
[5] Mark ix. 38; Luke ix. 49 [6] Luke ix. 54. [7] Acts ii. 1.
[8] Acts ii. 46; iii. 1.

iv. The writers, then, who first employ these remarkable expressions were of Jewish nationality, and had been brought up under all the influences that moulded the life of the Elect Nation. Now, undoubtedly it is true that the forefathers of the Nation had been unable to resist the spell of the various idolatries practised by the peoples lying around the Holy Land, and had neglected the observance of the time-honoured Sabbath. But the Jerusalem of the age of the Prophets was not the Jerusalem of St. John and St. Paul. It was necessary for the Prophet Isaiah to utter solemn warnings against the profanation of the day,[1] and for Jeremiah and Ezekiel to denounce the violation of it as one of the greatest of the national sins.[2] But during the dreary years, when the people went into captivity and "hanged their harps by the waters of Babylon," all this was changed. The same impulse seized them under which the Christian world of the sixteenth century sprang back, over the whole of the Middle Ages, either to the Primitive or to the Apostolic times. The return from the Captivity marks the rise of the Puritan period of the Jewish Church.[3]

The age of St. John and St. Paul.

The Puritan period of the Jewish Church.

v. After the times of Nehemiah and Ezra,[4] there is no evidence of the Sabbath being neglected by

[1] Isa. lviii. 13, 14. [2] Jer. xvii. 21-27.; Ezek. xx. 12-24.
[3] Stanley's *Jewish Church*, iii. p. 31.
[4] Neh. x. 31; xiii. 15-22.

the Jews, except by such as fell into open apostacy.[1] From the Gospels we learn that the Jews in our Lord's time laid the most marked stress upon the observance of the Sabbath, and the minute rules imposed respecting it, and the slightness of the acts whereby its sacredness could be impaired, receive constantly recurring illustration. The nation might be opposed and apparently crushed by the stern power of Idumæan or Roman rulers, but the slightest effort to enforce customs not authorized by the Mosaic law was the signal for an outbreak of zeal and fanaticism which bore down everything before it, and from which even the boldest statesmen recoiled. The Maccabæan generals at first declined to fight against Antiochus or to defend themselves on the Sabbath,

The stress laid on Sabbath observance in our Lord's time.

Opposition to the enforcement of customs not authorized by the Mosaic law.

> "Because," says Josephus, "they were not willing to break in upon the honour they owed the Sabbath even in such distresses, for our law requires that we rest on that day."[2]

Later leaders, Mattathias and Jonathan, allowed their countrymen to repel, but not to attack an enemy on that day. The Jewish historian, however, bears the most complete testimony to the strictness with which the day was observed,[3] and the sneers of Horace, Juvenal, and Persius[4] bear

The testimony of Josephus to the strict observance of the day.

[1] 1 Macc. i. 11–15, 39–45. [2] Jos. *Ant.* xii. 6, 2.
[3] Jos. *Ant.* xiv. 6, 2; xvii. 9. 2.
[4] "Hodie tricesima *Sabbata*. Vin tu Curtis Judæis oppedere?"—Hor. *Sat.* i. ix. 69.
"To-day is our thirtieth *Sabbath*. Do you desire to offend the circumcised Jews?"

The observance of the Sabbath the pledge of the Jew's nationality.

out the statement that wherever the Jew went, the observance of the Sabbath became the most visible pledge of his nationality.

Excitement produced by placing the Roman eagle on one of the portals of the temple, and by the introduction of the military standard into Jerusalem.

VI. So great, indeed, was the re-action after the return from the Captivity, so intense the readiness to resent the slightest departure from the enactments of the law, that the Idumæan Herod could not set up in the theatre the representations of the victories of Cæsar, or place the Roman eagle on one of the portals of the Temple without producing a violent outbreak of popular excitement. On another occasion, the Roman governor Pilate, under cover of night, ventured to introduce the military standards into Jerusalem.[1] In the morning the populace awoke to the consciousness of this insult to their strongest prejudices. Abstaining from all violence, they sent a deputation to the governor at Cæsarea, intreating him to remove the standards. For days the ambassadors crowded his pretorium; and when Pilate brought out his troops to overawe and disperse them, they flung themselves with one accord upon the ground, and there remained im-

"Quidam sortiti metuentem *Sabbata* patrem
Nil præter nubes et cœli numen adorant."—Juvenal *Sat.* xiv. 96.
"Some, whose lot it is to have a father paying respect to *Sabbaths*,
Worship nothing except the clouds and the divinity of the sky,"
and Ovid *A. A.* i. 76, "Cultaque Judæo *septima* sacra Syro"—
"And the festival of the seventh day observed by the Syrian
Jew;" Persius *Sat.* v. 184, "Labra moves tacitus recutitaque
Sabbata palles,"—"You move your lips in silence and turn pale
at the circumcised *Sabbath*."

[1] Jos. *Ant.* xv. 8, 2.

moveable for five days and as many nights, declaring with vehemence that they were ready to die rather than sanction any infringement of their law, so that in the end Pilate was constrained to withdraw the obnoxious emblems.[1] Later still, the insane edict of Caligula, demanding that he should receive divine honours, and that a golden statue of himself should be placed in the Holy of Holies,[2] while in other provinces of the Empire it met with little or no resistance, excited amongst the Jewish nation the most violent hostility. The polished Athenians sighed to see the heads of some of their noblest images struck off, and the trunks carried to Rome, to be united to the features of a barbarian Emperor. But it was a sigh for the insult offered to art, taste, and feeling. It was not a sigh for the profanation of their religious principles which they resented.[3] The Jews, on the other hand, were ready to resist even unto blood any insult offered to their national faith and the Mosaic law.

The hostility to the edict of Caligula.

The profanation of their religious principles resented by the Jews.

VII. But what were the violations of the religious sentiment of the nation either actually carried out or attempted by a Herod, a Pilate, a Caligula, compared with the conduct of those who for the first time practically transferred the honour due to the ancient Sabbath to "the first day of the week?" What

The violation of religious sentiment involved in the transfer of the honour due to the ancient Sabbath to the first day of the week.

[1] Jos. *Ant.* xvii. 3, 1, 2; *Bell. Jud.* ii. ix. 2–4.

[2] Philo *in Flacc.* c. 7. *Leg. ad Caium* 26; Sueton. *Calig.* xxii.

[3] Merivale's *Romans under the Empire*, vi. 45.

was the ignorant disregard of time-honoured scruples on the part of heathen rulers, compared with the startling practices of these daring innovators? They, at any rate, could not plead ignorance or unconsciousness of the popular feeling. Brought up from earliest childhood in the strictest observance of the Mosaic law, they retained many of their religious customs.[1] They were found at the fixed hours of prayers joining in the Temple worship; they observed the great annual festivals,[2] they conformed even in minor points to many legal and ceremonial enactments.[3] And yet, in one most momentous particular, they did not scruple to disregard the fondly cherished tradition of the nation. To the Jew the Sabbath was the weekly commemoration of the rest of God after the Creation. "Remember," said the Great Lawgiver, "that thou keep holy the Sabbath day. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it."[4] "Israel was the people to whom God had revealed the mystery of creation; that master-truth by which human thought is saved now as of old from the sin and folly of confounding God with his works. It brought before the mind of the Jew the ineffable majesty of the

The Jewish training and practices of the innovators.

Their disregard in one particular of the fondly cherished tradition of the nation.

What the Sabbath was to the Jew.

[1] Acts i. 14; iii. 1. [2] Acts xx. 16. [3] Acts xxi. 26.
[4] Exod. xx. 3, 11.

Great Creater, between whom and the noblest work of His Hands there yawns an impassable abyss."[1]

St. Paul's conduct in relation to it.

And yet, though no one could have felt the force of this more completely than St. Paul, he does not scruple to run counter to the prejudices and feelings of his nation on the subject.

VIII. He seeks out his countrymen, it is true, in their synagogues[2] on the Sabbath, and there expounds to them the Hebrew Scriptures; but when he celebrates a service of his own, what do we find? Take the case when he reaches Troas, and abides there seven days. What does he do? How does St. Luke's narrative run? Does he say,

"On the last day of his stay, Paul called the disciples together to break bread, and preached unto them?"

Is this what we find? Instead, we read,

His observance of the first day of the week.

"On *the first day of the week* Paul preached unto them."[3]

His instructions as to the collection for the poor to the Galatians and Corinthians.

When again he bids the Galatians and Corinthians[4] make a religious collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem, he directs that it shall be carried out on the self-same day.

IX. How comes it to pass that the first day of the week has already become the stated day of Christian assembling[5] for breaking the Bread, for

[1] Liddon's *Easter Sermons*, ii. 92.

[2] Acts xiii. 14, 42, 44; xvi. 13.; xvii. 2.; xviii. 4.

[3] Acts xx. 7. [4] 1 Cor. xvi. 2.

[5] See Hessey's *Bampton Lectures*, p. 40.

receiving instruction, for collecting alms? Why do we never find the Apostle inculcating the carrying out of these duties on the seventh day? What motive had he for making or even conniving at this change from the seventh to the first day?

Some explanation of St. Paul's conduct is called for.

When we reflect on the traditions amidst which the Apostle had been brought up from his earliest years, on the force of the religious ideas which had been to him as the atmosphere he breathed, the fact that he acquiesces in the change and gives no elaborate explanation of it is very remarkable. That such a revolution of sentiment should have emanated from such a soil as Judaism is very startling. It calls for some adequate explanation consistent with its occurrence at the time it did, and at an historic epoch of which we can assign the date.

SECTION III.

St. John in Patmos.

1. But there is something still more surprising. St. John speaks of himself at the outset of the Apocalypse, and says in the passage to which reference has already been made, "I was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus. I was in the Spirit on *the Lord's Day*."[1]

What did he mean by the expression "The Lord's Day"?

11. What did he mean by this expression? There is no real reason for doubting that by "the Lord's Day" St. John meant what St. Paul terms

[1] Apoc. i. 9, 10.

"the first day of the week."[1] But what is especially noteworthy is the solemn and momentous name which St. John applies to it, and which the Christian Church in every age has agreed to bestow upon it. He calls the first day of the week ἡ Κυριακὴ ἡμέρα,[2] "the Lord's Day," and thus connects it by its very name with a Person.

"The Lord's Day" equivalent to the "first day of the week."

He connects it with a person.

III. What did he mean by this term? It is a very uncommon one. It occurs here, and here only. The adjective Κυριακὸς denotes "belonging to a lord or ruler." It occurs in two places only throughout the entire New Testament. It is found here, and St. Paul uses it in the eleventh chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians, where he calls the Eucharistic feast the "Supper of the Lord," τὸ Κυριακὸν δεῖπνον. Now the name Κυριὸς, Lord, is applied to Christ frequently in the New Testament.

It signifies "belonging to a lord or ruler."

The name Lord applied to Christ in the New Testament.

Thus (*a*) there are texts in which He is called Lord in the various acceptations of Master over

[1] Some indeed, as Eichhorn, understand the Lord's Day to refer to Easter Day, but this is quite improbable. Others maintain that it means the Day of Judgment. But the great "Day of the Lord" in this sense is expressed by ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ Κυρίου, 2 Thess. ii. 2; or ἡ ἡμέρα Κυρίου, 2 Pet. iii. 10; or, the "Day of Christ," ἡμέρα Χριστοῦ, Phil. ii. 16; *never* by ἡ Κυριακὴ ἡμέρα.

[2] Apoc. i. 10. ἡ κυριακὴ ἡμέρα = in Latin, dies dominica, from which in the Romance languages the first day of the week derived its name. Ital. *Domenica;* Span. *Domingo;* Fr. *Dimanche.*

The senses in which Christ is called Lord.

servants;[1] of prophet, or teacher.[2] Again (*b*) He is so called as One who has acquired a peculiar right to those over whom He exercises authority in virtue of the price which He has paid for men.[3]

Christ is Lord in the highest sense of all.

iv. But there is a still higher sense in which Christ is Lord. Of the names of God, Jehovah is the most sacred and the most solemn. A Jew who believes in Judaism will not pronounce it. Those who read Hebrew with him are at once warned that they are expected to substitute for it the word Adonai.[4] The name itself was long ago withdrawn from the popular speech of the nation, and even from their writings, till at length it lingered only in the mouth of the High Priest, and was only uttered by him on rare and necessary occasions, such as the Day of Atonement,[5] while as he uttered it, those who stood near cast themselves with their faces on the ground, and the multitude responded, "Blessed be the Name, the glory of His kingdom is for ever and ever."[6] This Name, as applied to God, denotes that He is "the Eternal," "the Self-existent," the great I AM.[7] By the

The significance of the name Jehovah.

[1] Matt. x. 25; xxiv. 45, 46.

[2] Matt. viii. 25; xvi. 22; Luke ix. 54; x. 17, 40; John xi. 12; xiii. 6, 9, 13; xxi. 15-17.

[3] Eph. vi. 9.; Col. iii. 24; iv. 1; Rom. xiv. 9.

[4] See the little treatise of the Bishop of Derry on the *Divinity of our Lord*, p. 27.

[5] Stanley's *Jewish Church*, iii. 162.

[6] Edersheim's *Temple Service*, p. 271. [7] Exod. iii. 13, 14.

Septuagint writers it was translated Κύριος, Lord, and the translation was adopted by the writers of the New Testament, and applied to Christ so repeatedly that it became His usual designation. Thus St. Thomas, addressing Him, says, "My *Lord* and my God;"[1] St. Peter speaks of Him as "*Lord* of all,"[2] "whose is the glory and the dominion unto the ages of the ages;"[3] and St. Paul affirms that whereas He was originally, before His Incarnation, "in the absolute form of God,"[4] "God blessed for ever,"[5] as the reward of His humiliation "God gave unto Him the Name which is above every name, that in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is *Lord* to the glory of God the Father."[6]

The rendering of the name in the Septuagint and the New Testament.

v. Now it is a word recalling this Name, surrounded by all these august associations, that St. John does not scruple to apply to the first day of the week, when he says he was in the Spirit on *the Lord's Day*. He not only connects the day with a Person, but that Person is One, with whom Divine attributes could be associated, and would be so associated by those who read or heard the term he employs.

This name recalled by St. John's use of the term "The Lord's Day."

[1] St. John xx. 28. [2] Acts x. 36. [3] 1 Pet. iv. 11.

[4] Phil. ii. 6, ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων, see Bishop Lightfoot's note on the force here of μορφὴ and ὑπάρχων.

[5] Rom. ix. 5. [6] Phil. ii. 11; comp. Acts ii. 36; Rom. x. 9.

No day ever kept by the Jews in honour of a single person.

vi. But there is still something to be added. It is true that the Jewish nation had days for commemorating great and rare passages of Divine Providence in their past history. But what single day had the Jews ever kept in honour of any particular person, however holy or exalted? Where is to be found any trace of the celebration of a day in honour of Abraham, the father of the faithful; or of Moses, the great law-giver; or David, the founder of the royal line; or of Judas Maccabæus, the restorer of the national glories? True it is that they had days on which they commemorated mighty deliverances and signal marks of the Divine favour. But on which of these had their thoughts ever been directed to a single Person, with whom they could associate, as indicating His day, words which, whether we take their lower or their higher sense, had been ever associated with Deity? What powerful and constraining motive could have induced men trained in Judaism to detach themselves from every association of the past, and passing by the honour due to the time-honoured Sabbath, advance higher claims to observance for a day hitherto unheard of in connection with sacred memories?

The breach with the past in advancing the claims made for the Lord's Day.

vii. Had St. John defended the expression with a long and laboured apology it would not have been so surprising. The necessity of the case would seem to have called for it. But we have not a word of

explanation, not a syllable of defence. He does not assume that his readers will be the least surprised at it, or take offence at his use of it. Artlessly, fearlessly he mentions it in the most incidental manner. The expression falls from his pen so casually and unconsciously that we almost forget what it implies. The boldness of the claim made for the day, that it could be connected with a Person, and that He could be for some reason entitled to the "Ineffable Name," which his countrymen could not even pronounce, passes all conception. They to whom the writer was chiefly addressing himself, knew and felt that the Jewish covenant was the most sacred thing in the universe, and the Sabbath one of its most characteristic institutions, and yet without a single word of explanation he speaks to them of another day, which he does not scruple to consecrate by a name of sacred and mystical meaning, and to associate with a person. Are we not justified in asking, Did something occur on the first day of the week to the Person thus commemorated, which could justify its being termed *His* day? If there was something, the application of the term is in some degree accounted for. If there was not, its use by St. John remains an insoluble enigma.

The expression used by St. John without apology or defence and in an incidental manner.

The views and feelings on the subject of the Sabbath of those to whom St. John wrote did not lead him to explain.

How is St. John's use of the phrase to be accounted for?

SECTION IV.

The agreement of the Churches that the Lord's Day was the Day of the Lord Jesus.

1. WHO, then, was this Person? The answer to the question will not be disputed. All the Churches, Western and Oriental, agree with unbroken unanimity that the day called by St. John the Lord's Day, was the day of the Lord Jesus Christ.

St. John's connection with Jesus.

II. How had St. John been connected with Him? Himself the son, apparently the younger son, of Zebedee and Salome,[1] natives of Northern Galilee, he had been brought up in the simple Jewish faith of the simple-hearted people of the neighbourhood of the Lake of Tiberias. Devoted to his father's pursuits as a fisherman on the Lake,[2] he yet shared the passionate longings and enthusiastic hopes of his countrymen as regards the coming of the Messiah. When the voice from the wilderness proclaimed his Advent, St. John at once responded to that voice, and moving southwards, ranged himself amongst the Baptist's disciples.

His call by John the Baptist.

III. But he did more than this. Though simple and unlettered,[3] and unskilled in the traditions and speculations of the schools, he had grasped with singular power the spiritual import of the Baptist's message. He no sooner heard the mysterious words, "Behold the Lamb of God," than he obeyed the sign and followed his new Master.[4]

His obedience to the Baptist's testimony to Christ.

[1] Mark xv. 40; xvi. 1, compared with Matt. xxvii. 56.

[2] Mark i. 19. [3] Acts iv. 13. [4] John i. 37.

iv. After remaining with Him for a time, he seems to have gone back to his old employment. From this he is again called to become a fisher of men,[1] and to form one of the Apostolic body. In this body he forms with his brother James and St. Peter "the chosen three," who at the raising of Jairus' daughter,[2] at the Transfiguration,[3] and in the Garden of Gethsemane,[4] are admitted into nearer relationship with the Lord than the rest. But in this group, though St. Peter takes the lead, it is St. John who is nearest and dearest to the Lord, "the disciple whom Jesus loved." On more than one occasion, as has been already indicated,[5] he displays loyal and true though undisciplined zeal, and reveals the ardour of his Galilæan temper, and his burning love for his Master.

Called to be a fisher of men.

His nearness to the Lord.

His burning love to Him.

v. On the occasion of the last journey to Jerusalem, Salome, as the mouth-piece of her two sons,[6] begs that they may sit, the one on the Master's right hand, and the other on His left in His kingdom. This reveals, in spite of his close relationship with Christ, the earthly ambition of the son of Zebedee, and the fact that he had failed to comprehend the nature of His kingdom. But it is important. For it makes manifest the sort of kingdom to which he is looking, and the sense in which he would at this time have inter-

His views of Christ's kingdom.

[1] Matt. iv. 19; Luke v. 1–11. [2] Mark v. 37. [3] Mark ix. 2.
[4] Matt. xxvi. 37. [5] See above p. 9. [6] Matt. xx. 20; Mark x. 35.

preted such an expression as "the Lord's Day." He would have regarded "the Lord's Day" as meaning the day on which the Master, to whom he was so devotedly attached, did actually assume the sceptre and ascend the throne, to which in His Messianic dignity He laid claim.

The sense which St. John would have attached to the term "the Lord's Day."

VI. But did his Lord assume a sceptre or ascend a throne? Did He, as an earthly sovereign, place one of the sons of Salome on His right hand, and the other on His left? We will not seek an answer from any Christian writer. Tacitus, the Roman historian, shall reply to the question. We turn to the XV. Book of his Annals, and the 44th chapter. He is describing the burning of Rome in the reign of Nero, and the circulation of a rumour that it was brought about by an Imperial order—

The Crucifixion of Christ.

"To get rid of the report," he writes, "Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called by the populace Christians."

Then he adds—

"*Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius, at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus.*"

VII. Has the fact thus recorded ever been disproved? Has its accuracy ever been invalidated? Never. The reign of the Emperor Tiberius has been described not only by Tacitus, but by Suetonius, and other authors of good repute, and the crucifixion of Him, whom St. John called his Lord, is mentioned by them as a matter of common notoriety,

The testimony of Tacitus Suetonius, etc.

and gives point to many a cruel and opprobrious epithet directed against His followers.[1]

The date of the Crucifixion.

VIII. The mention of the reign of the Emperor Tiberius fixes the chronological limits of the date of this Crucifixion, and of the infliction of the extreme penalty which Tacitus records. It cannot be pushed much further back than the year, A.D. 30, and this is the year generally accepted as its date. It is important to notice this. It places us in distinctly historic times. It is not a period hidden in the mists of fabulous ages. It is a period of which we know a great deal. It had its archives, its registers, its monuments. We can examine them and cross-examine them, and the statements of Tacitus relate to the actions of one of the most practical people the world has seen, at the most practical period of their history, when their roads, their bridges, their baths, their aqueducts were scattering the memorials of those who erected them in all parts of the world.

The evidence can be sifted.

St. John gives a full account.

IX. Does St. John anywhere deny what Tacitus records? Nowhere. What the Roman historian mentions in a single paragraph, he proclaims wherever he goes. In his own narrative of his Master's life, it is described with the minute particularity of a diary.[2] Three other Evangelists also give equally full descriptions. However condensed their

[1] Comp. Lucian, *de Morte Peregrini* c. 11.; Origen *c. Celsum* vii. 40; Arnob *adv Gentes*, i. 36.

[2] See Canon Liddon's *Bampton Lectures*, viii. 475.

accounts may be in recording other portions of our Lord's life, here they agree to relate fully every detail. Without attempting to conceal a single particle of its shame, the writers record carefully the fact of their Master's death One of His disciples, they tell us, had betrayed Him to his foes. One of them, and he one of the chosen three, had basely denied that he ever knew Him. Where was St. John? He was by His cross. Where were the rest? They had forsaken Him and fled.[1] This is his own account of the matter in his own Gospel. He neither hides nor disguises, he neither palliates it, nor excuses it. With singular openness, with unexampled particularity, he tells us the story of the cowardice and faithlessness of his companions. What interest he had, or others who have told the story with him, in describing the actors as worse than they really were, it is difficult to see, and it is impossible to understand.

None of the evangelists practise any concealment with reference to the death of Christ.

St. John was at the Cross.

x. But there is still another document to be put in, which has been already alluded to, and which, like the testimony of Tacitus, comes to us not from a Christian but from a heathen writer. About the year A.D. 112, the younger Pliny,[2] then acting as governor of the province of Pontus and Bithynia, informs the Emperor Trajan of the appearance

The Epistle of Pliny.

[1] Observe the singular force of St. Matthew's words, xxvi. 56.

[2] Pliny's *Epist. ad Traj.* xcvi.

within his province of a new and strange superstition, which

"had already affected many of all ranks, and even of both sexes, had caused many of the temples to be almost deserted, the sacrifices to cease, and the sacrificial victims to find few purchasers."

Respecting the members of this strange sect he had, after inquiry, discovered

"that they were accustomed to meet together on a stated day *(stato die)* before it was light, and to sing hymns to Christ as to a God, and to bind themselves by a *sacramentum*, not for any wicked purpose, but never to commit fraud, theft, adultery; never to break their word, or to refuse, when called upon, to deliver up their trust."

Pliny's reference to the Lord's Day.

XI. What is worthy of note here is that the celebration of a particular day by the Christians, for of these Pliny is speaking, had become so marked as to impress the heathen with its distinctive character as a "status dies," and that this day was the first day of the week, the Lord's Day, is indisputable. The votaries of this strange superstition sang hymns to Christ "as to a God." The day therefore was regarded as a day of festal joy and thanksgiving.

The day shown to be one of joy and thanksgiving.

XII. But what reason could they have given for singing on this day hymns in token of joy and thanksgiving? Had not the Christ in whose name they met together been crucified? How comes it to pass that they can salute Him as a God? Suppose any one of those early Christians had unfolded a scroll containing the memoirs which were then in circulation of Him who died, what would he have

How did it come to have this character?

The state of the disciples at Christ's death.

found to have been the condition of His disciples at His death? According to their own confession, he would have read that they were stupefied with despair, and overwhelmed with disappointment? Why then did they not try to efface all recollection of the terrible fact? Why did they not acknowledge that they had been the victims of delusion in accepting Him as their Lord, and own their untoward mistake? Would not this have been natural? Is it not what we should have expected under the circumstances? How comes it to pass, then, that instead of this, the self-same men, who confess their stupefaction at His death, are found,[1] after a brief interval, in the very city where there would be the greatest disinclination to believe and the greatest solicitude to confute their statements, where the counterproofs were all in the hands of their enemies, proclaiming their belief in Him who had died the death of the malefactor and the slave, and electing a fresh member of their body in place of one who had betrayed Him?[2]

Their state a few days after.

XIII. How comes it to pass that we find that after the hopeless ignominy of the scene on Calvary, one like St. Paul could have been induced to transfer to the first day of the week the sacredness of the Sabbath of the Mosaic law, and on it to celebrate the Eucharistic feast which, except on one supposition, commemorated the complete disappointment of the

The sacredness of the Mosaic Sabbath transferred to the first day of the week

[1] Acts i. 14. [2] Acts i. 21-26.

hopes of the Christian body? What could have induced St. John to call this first day of the week the Lord's Day, which could only, except on one supposition, serve to remind him and the members of the Asiatic Churches of a terrible and tragical reversal of all his expectations as to the setting up of his Master's kingdom?

One supposition only can explain the facts.

XIV. I say, *except on one supposition.* What is this? Except on the supposition *that after the scene on Calvary, some event took place as certain and as historically true as the Death there enacted, glorious enough to transfigure the desolation of that scene, and powerful enough to turn all its sorrow and shame into joy and triumph.* If such an event took place, then we can understand how St. John came to speak of the first day of the week as the Lord's Day without adding a word of comment or explanation, as though he was alluding to a custom already well understood and already accepted by the Christian Church. If such an event took place, then we can comprehend why those votaries of a strange superstition in Pliny's province, "sang hymns to Christ as a God," and met on a fixed day to celebrate His memory. The words of Tacitus it is plain, though undisputed for their historical accuracy, cannot contain the whole account of the matter. They do not give us a shadow of a shade of reason for the mysterious observance of this particular day ever since

On this supposition we can understand St. John's references to the Lord's Day, and why the Christians "sang hymns to Christ as a God."

Apostolic times. The motive for the observance of the old Sabbath of the Law on the seventh day was clear and intelligible. It rested on a Divine ordinance. To alter it was unpardonable, unless there was an overwhelming reason for making the change. But what was this reason? Did any event occur which made the change imperative?

SECTION V.

There was an event that explains everything.

1. Was there, I repeat, such an event?

The Christian Church in every age has assured her children that there was. The author of the Epistle which contains the earliest allusion to the observance of "the first day of the week," informs us that after the Crucifixion, He "who suffered under Pontius Pilate" was buried.[1] Herein he agrees with the narrative of the four Evangelists, who, one and all, tell us that the holy Body of their Master was taken down from the Cross, and laid in a tomb hewn out of the rock in a garden hard by Calvary, in the possession of Joseph of Arimathea.

The burial of Christ.

11. They are careful to inform us—with what object it is difficult to see, unless it is true—that even this act of kindness and consideration was due not to any of the original Apostolic body, but to secret disciples and comparative strangers[2]

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 4. [2] Matt. xxvii. 57–61; Mk. xv. 42–47; Luke xxiii. 50–56; John xix. 38–42.

—Joseph of Arimathæa and Nicodemus. The former, who had begged the Body of Pilate,[1] and the latter, who had brought a "mixture of myrrh and aloes"[2] to embalm it, made the necessary preparations, and conveyed the holy Body to the tomb, placed it in a niche of the rock, rolled a great stone against the entrance, and went their way.

The body in the tomb two successive nights.

III. In that tomb the Body lay during the Friday night that followed the Crucifixion, and the succeeding Saturday and Saturday night, protected by a guard of Roman soldiers, whose presence had been requested by the Jewish rulers, from the intrusion alike of friends and enemies.[3]

It was missing on the first day of the week.

IV. But early in the morning of *the first day of the week*[4] the stone was found to have been rolled away, and the sepulchre was discovered to be empty. If, however, the sepulchre was empty, where was He who had been laid therein? *He was no longer there. He had risen, even as He had said.* This is the unanimous testimony of the four Evangelists, and of St. Paul in his indisputably authentic letter to the Corinthians. This is the fact which, in spite of contempt and obloquy, the loss of caste, and the sacrifice of all that makes life tolerable, in spite of the bitterest hatred

That Christ had risen unanimously testified by the four Evangelists and St. Paul.

[1] John xix. 38. [2] John xix. 39. [3] Matt. xxvii. 62–66.

[4] Matt. xxviii. 1; Mark xvi. 2; Luke xxiv. 1; John xx. 1. Each of the four Evangelists lays special stress on the fact that it was the *first day of the week.*

and the keenest persecution, the first disciples made it their business to proclaim as no less historical than their Master's Passion. This is the event which, as they affirmed, transfigured the shame of the Cross, and turned its desolation into triumph.

The Resurrection transfigured the Crucifixion.

v. But not only did He rise again on the first day of the week, but on the self-same day He revealed Himself on *five distinct occasions* to "chosen witnesses."[1] On this day He was seen by Mary of Magdala,[2] by the other ministering women,[3] by the two disciples journeying to Emmaus.[4] On this day He appeared to St. Peter[5] separately, and to the ten Apostles gathered together in the Upper Room at Jerusalem.[6] He was seen indeed afterwards. But on no day is He recorded to have "manifested Himself" so often. Never was He busier than on the world's first Easter Day. No day would be associated in the memories of the first disciples with more frequent proofs of His triumph over death. No day by the record of more multiplied incidents established its claim to be called "the Lord's Day."

His five appearances to chosen witnesses on the world's first Easter Day.

vi. *On the third day He rose again from the dead.* M. Renan, in his *Life of Jesus*, lays down this axiom, "Great events have always great causes."[7]

M. Renan's axiom.

[1] Acts x. 41. [2] Mark xvi. 9, 10; John xx. 11-18.
[3] Matt. xxviii. 8-10. [4] Mark xvi. 12; Luke xxiv. 13-35.
[5] 2 Cor. xv. 5; Luke xxiv. 34. [6] Luke xxiv. 36-43; John xx. 19-23.
[7] See Godet's *Lectures in Defence of the Christian Faith*, p. 128.

We have been seeking an adequate cause for one of the most striking phenomena of religious life amongst the most cultivated nations of the earth—the observance of the first day of the week as the Lord's Day; and in the Resurrection of Christ we find it. In each of the Epistles to the Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans—a group recognised as genuine by the most sceptical writers and critics—the literal fact of the Resurrection is regarded as the groundwork of the teaching of the Apostle Paul. He does not treat the fact ideally, but historically. He does not regard it as the embodiment of a great hope, or as the consequence of some preconceived notion of the person of Christ. On the contrary, he rests his hope on the fact, and deduces his view of Christ's nature from the literal event of His rising again.[1]

The Resurrection of Christ an adequate cause of the observance of the Lord's Day.

The Resurrection the groundwork of St. Paul's teaching.

VII. Twice when our Lord was asked by the Jewish authorities for a miraculous sign in attestation of His Divine claims, He referred those who pressed Him for such a sign to His resurrection from the dead. His other miracles were "signs." This was to be "the sign." If He gave it, and rose triumphant from the tomb, we have the clue to what has taken place. If He did not, to what are we to look for the origin of the observance of the first day of the week as His day? When we remember the soil in which the observance of the

Our Saviour's references to the Resurrection as a sign.

It is the clue to what had taken place

[1] See Westcott's *Gospel of the Resurrection*, p. 109.

day first took root, we have a measure of the depth of conviction which must have been needed to break with old and time-honoured associations, and bring about its institution at all.

The religious observance of the Lord's Day by a man like St. John inconceivable if Christ did not rise from the dead.

VIII. If, after undergoing all He did on the hill of Calvary, He in whose honour the members of the strange sect in Pliny's province of Bithynia, "sang hymns as to a God," passed away like other men, and still "lies in the lorn Syrian town," how is it conceivable that a man like St. John could have kept the Lord's Day as one of religious obligation? What would have justified him in the countenancing the change of day from one already consecrated by the Divine law? What could have induced him to sanction an institution which must have involved a shock to the prejudices of every pious member of his nation?

No other reason could account for it.

IX. What possible reason could he have urged as imperative for inaugurating or countenancing so unique an observance? Was it because the death on Calvary was a martyrdom? But what aspect of a martyrdom did it present to the eyes even of the most attached disciple of Him who died? It sealed no national cause. It crowned no patriotic rising. It recalled no daring enterprise vainly, though courageously, under-

taken against the Roman power.[1] The bandits indeed, who died by the side of the Christ, *were* not improbably regarded by the bystanders as martyrs. We read of no mockery of *them.* We hear of no bitter gibes cast in *their* teeth. Blasphemy and scorn were reserved for Him who occupied the central Cross.[2] His death was the last drop in the cup of a complete and crushing disappointment of all the hopes and aspirations of His followers. Were they likely to enshrine in such an institution as "*the Lord's Day*" what could only have been the tale of their defeat, and the memory of their error?

Christ's death a disappointment of His disciples' hopes.

x. Was the honour due to the seventh transferred to the first day of the week because He who died thereby inaugurated a new covenant between God and man? The seventh day, indeed, as kept by the Jews *did* commemorate a covenant ratified by God through the hands of a Mediator. But what proof of the acceptance of His death as a sacrifice was vouchsafed if, in spite of all that He had said, death proved in the case of Christ, as in that of all others, "the great conqueror?" Could the death on Calvary, if it stood alone, and nothing followed, be claimed as inaugurating a new and better covenant? "A whole world of the most

No proof of an accepted sacrifice if Christ did not rise from the dead.

[1] See the *Evidential Value of the Holy Eucharist*, the Boyle Lectures for 1879.

[2] See Archbishop Trench's *Studies in the Gospels*, pp. 293, 294.

Divine ideas," it has been said, "lies in our seeing aright the distinction between the Sabbath and the Lord's day!"[1] And yet that distinction came in a moment to the Twelve! Within nine days after the Voice had been heard saying, "*It is finished; Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit*," we trace the earliest beginnings of the observance of the first day of the week.[2] But on what possible ground did the Apostolic body meet again on that day, if, after disappointing every hope they had ever cherished, their Master died, and was no more seen? What valid answer to the question is there, if nothing distinguished the first day of the week from all others?

The earliest beginnings of the observance of the Lord's Day.

Its early observance unintelligible without the Resurrection.

XI. The early observance of the Lord's Day, whether we reflect on the period when it began, or the previous training of those who first accepted it, or the renunciation of old beliefs which it implied, or the total and overmastering change of thought and feeling in reference to a time-honoured institution like the Sabbath, which it involved, remains, and for ever must remain, an absolutely unintelligible phenomenon without the fact of the Resurrection. It can be accounted for neither by an imaginary death nor by a visionary resurrection. A visionary resurrection runs up in the last analysis into a fraudulent resurrection, connived at by the

[1] Professor Milligan's *Lectures*, p. 68.

[2] Comp. John xx. 26, "And after eight days again the disciple were within."

most passionate teachers of the duty of veracity. The observance of this day is too solid a fact to repose on a foundation of mist. A "splendid guess," a "vague but loving hope," the dream of an enthusiast, the vision of credulous disciples—these will not account for an objective fact as indubitable as the institution and continued observance through so many centuries of a day so peculiarly designated as *the Lord's Day*. They will not bear the weight of the superstructure they have to support.

The observance too solid a fact to repose on a foundation of mist.

XII. The Resurrection, on the other hand, by the fact of the absence of any human agent as its author, takes its place on a level with the most prodigious of miracles—that of Creation. To summon into life and to recall to life are two acts of the same nature. "Creation is the victory of Omnipotence over nothingness; the Resurrection is the victory of the same power over death, which is the thing most like to nothingness that is known to us."[1] Science has done wonders, and in the world of science much has been accomplished to justify the words of Sophocles,

The miracle of Resurrection on a level with Creation.

> "Many the things that mighty be,
> And none is mightier than man."[2]

But no man of science cherishes even the distant

[1] Godet's *Lectures*, p. 43.

[2] Sophocles' *Antig.* 332:

> Πολλὰ τὰ δεινὰ, κοὐδὲν ἀνθρώπου
> δεινότερον πέλει.

The Resurrection a creative act of the first order.

hope that he can undo the work of death, or keep death indefinitely at bay. The Resurrection is a creative act of the first order. It cannot stand as an isolated fact. He who said, "I have power to lay down My life, *and I have power to take it again*,"[1] spake as never man did or could speak. By His taking again His life He proved that He was more than man, that He was—God. He linked together the first Creation, which is the primordial fact in the history of the Universe, with a new creation, of which He too is the Author and the Source. The old Sabbath, with its commemoration of rest after the works of the first creation, was swallowed up in the new creation wrought by the Lord of Life on the first Lord's Day. The light streams in on the unique expression of the beloved disciple, and we see what he intended, we feel we "stand no longer at the foot of Sinai, but by the empty tomb in the garden outside Jerusalem."

Links the first Creation with the new creation.

The Resurrection alone explains all the facts connected with the Lord's Day.

XIII. Let us sum up. The Resurrection alone as an actual fact explains how it came to pass that the Lord's Day

(1) grew up naturally from the Apostolic times;

(2) gradually assumed the character of the one distinctively Christian Festival;

(3) drew to itself, as by an irresistible gravitation, the periodical rest, which is enjoined in the fourth commandment under the Mosaic Law;

[1] John x. 18.

(4) could as an observance be alluded to by St. Paul and St. John without a word of comment or explanation,

(5) and, though not enacted by any law in the Apostolic Church, could grow up and make its way by the intrinsic weight of its own reasonableness.

XIV. With the fact of the Resurrection the early observance of the Lord's Day runs smoothly into the context of the world's history, and we can explain

With the fact of the Resurrection the Lord's Day runs smoothly into the world's history.

(1) How the startling change of religious sentiment was brought about;

(2) How in spite of the shame of the Cross the Christian society could gather up and concentrate itself in adoration round the Person of Him Who died upon the Cross;

(3) How St. Paul could speak of Him, Who so died, as "the firstfruits of them that have fallen asleep," for "as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive."[1]

(4) How He, whom the Apostle John saw in vision on the Lord's Day, could say of Himself, "I am the First and the Last, and the Living One; and I was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore."[2]

(5) How since this event took place ten thousand times ten thousand Christian congregations have gathered themselves together on the Lord's

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 20, 22. [2] Apoc. i. 18.

Day in all quarters of the world, and have joined, if not in the words, yet in the spirit of the Hymn—

> On this day, the first of days,
> God the Father's name we praise,
> Who Creation's Lord and spring,
> Did the world from darkness bring.
>
> On this day the Eternal Son
> Over death His triumph won;
> On this day the Spirit came
> With His gifts of living flame.

xv. Can anyone explain how otherwise these facts are to be accounted for?

Professor Freeman's testimony.

"The miracle of miracles," says Professor Freeman,[1] "greater than dried-up seas and cloven rocks, was when the Augustus on his throne, Pontiff of the gods of Rome, himself a god to the subjects of Rome, bent himself to become the worshipper of a crucified provincial of his empire."

But why did he so "bend himself," if that Crucifixion was followed by no event which transfigured its shame? Why did he sanction the observance of the first day of the week as a day of joy and triumph? Why have the most civilized nations of the world acquiesced in its observance? The question demands an answer. But without the Resurrection what answer can be given that is not imaginary merely, and invented?

No other account than the Resurrection, but what is imaginary and invented, can explain the facts of history.

[1] *Chief Periods of European History*, p. 67.

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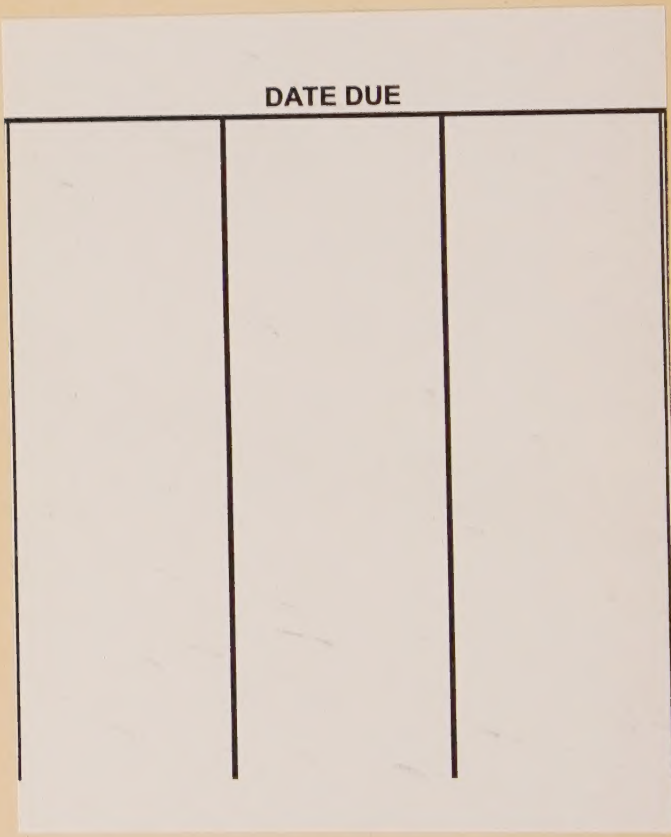

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